

Bethel University

Spark

---

All Electronic Theses and Dissertations

---

2022

## Motivating Factors For Academic Dishonesty And Reoccurrence Prevention Of These Behaviors

Andrew Bryzgornia  
*Bethel University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://spark.bethel.edu/etd>

---

### Recommended Citation

Bryzgornia, A. (2022). *Motivating Factors For Academic Dishonesty And Reoccurrence Prevention Of These Behaviors* [Master's thesis, Bethel University]. Spark Repository. <https://spark.bethel.edu/etd/840>

This Master's thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Spark. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Spark. For more information, please contact [kent-gerber@bethel.edu](mailto:kent-gerber@bethel.edu).

MOTIVATING FACTORS FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY  
AND REOCCURRENCE PREVENTION OF THESE BEHAVIORS

A MASTER'S THESIS  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
OF BETHEL UNIVERSITY

BY  
ANDREW BRYZGORNIA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION  
MAY 2022

BETHEL UNIVERSITY

MOTIVATING FACTORS FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY  
AND PREVENTING REOCCURRENCE OF THESE BEHAVIORS

Andrew Bryzgornia

May 2022

APPROVED

Thesis Advisor: Nathan Elliott, M.A.

Program Director: Lisa M. Silmser, Ed.D.

### **Abstract**

Teachers often turn to assessments to measure a student's learning in a class. The intent is for the student to complete this assessment by meeting the instructor's requirements, but often they look for alternate means to aid in the assignment's completion, which is known as academic dishonesty or cheating. While students may illegally use notes, partner with others, and more, it is common for the students to have other justifications beyond simply desiring a better grade in the class. Not knowing they are cheating, believing cheating is not wrong, believing the class is too difficult, distrusting the instructor, and having unexpected circumstances impede the assignment's completion are some of the examples of why students resort to academic dishonesty. Teachers and schools are not always innocent, either, as they may ignore cases of cheating and may even unknowingly behave in ways that encourage students to cheat more frequently. By considering options such as formulating policies with students, properly defining academic dishonesty, using effective preventative strategies, maintaining well-designed course expectations, educators and academic institutions can create environments that reduce the likelihood of cheating and discourage students from becoming repeat offenders.

## Table of Contents

Signature Page.....	2
Abstract.....	3
Table of Contents .....	4
Chapter I: Introduction .....	6
Context .....	6
Theoretical Framework .....	7
Rationale.....	8
Definition of Terms .....	9
Research Focus .....	10
Chapter II: Literature Review .....	12
Literature Search Procedures .....	12
Background of Academic Dishonesty.....	12
How and Why Students Cheat.....	14
Methods of Academic Dishonesty .....	14
Reasons and Justifications for Participation in Academic Dishonesty .....	17
Prevention of Initial and Repeated Offenses of Academic Dishonesty .....	37
Short-Term Preventative Tactics.....	37
Student Suggestions for Preventative Tactics .....	40
Long-Term Preventative Tactics.....	44
Preventative Tactics in Virtual Classes .....	49
Reactive Tactics After a Student is Caught Cheating .....	53

	5
Chapter III: Discussion and Conclusion .....	57
Summary of Literature .....	57
Limitations of the Research .....	61
Implications for Future Research.....	62
Implications for Professional Application .....	63
Conclusion .....	64
References.....	67

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### Context

Since the beginning of education, teachers have sought to assess their students' learning. However, these students have not always felt prepared to score sufficiently well on these assessments, or may not value the importance of the assessment, and thus may turn to alternate methods to deceive their teacher into believing they possess ample knowledge about the topic(s). While academic dishonesty may not be unusual in a school, it is typically regarded as immoral in Western cultures. Whether all students agree with that sentiment is inconsistent, though.

Educators are taught how to watch out for common forms of academic dishonesty and to levy consequences on students that are caught cheating. These procedures are typically designed to address customary dishonest habits as if all students consider the same reasons for cheating. Consistent application of these rules will dissuade most students from illicit scholarly behavior, but it is not a guarantee they will deter all students from engaging in these actions. Students may have unique circumstances and/or motivations that lead to immoral methods of completing their classwork, and thus single approaches may not directly target these individual justifications. Therefore, a more robust look at preventative strategies and consequences will aid in the further reduction of academic dishonesty.

The actual implementation of these strategies is critical as well. Whether due to a lack of desire to police it, time constraints, poor class design, or other reasons, educators may also contribute to a student's desire to cheat. While academic

dishonesty is typically performed by the student, they may feel more brazen to cheat if they interpret their teacher does not adequately discourage these actions.

Additional challenges occur with the increase in the popularity of remote learning. Already in existence for decades, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the option to become more widely available starting in the spring of 2020. While students were already completing many assignments outside the classroom, remote learning made it tougher for instructors to monitor assessments effectively. Though many schools are transitioning back to full in-person learning, some are continuing to offer a choice for students in the name of accommodation and personal safety, but it is possible that remote learning remains popular because it offers more opportunities for academic dishonesty. With little formal training given for teaching remotely, educators need to research best instructional practices themselves to maintain the integrity of their virtual classes.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Academic dishonesty, or cheating as it's colloquially known, is generally frowned upon in the educational setting. Nevertheless, it still occurs as students look for methods to complete their course requirements in ways alternate from what is desired by their teacher and/or school. Academic dishonesty typically occurs when students use notes or past exams, improperly cite sources, fabricate information, and/or collaborate with others to complete their classwork, methods which were not approved by their instructor.



To discourage students from resorting to immoral means to meet the class requirements, educators and academic institutions often use disciplinary policies such as awarding a grade of zero for the assignment, giving the student a detention or academic suspension, and/or expelling the student from the program or even from the school. Some schools have some form of an honor code, a pledge where students agree that their classwork was or will be completed without resorting to academic dishonesty. Student acknowledgment is often done by signing the honor code at the beginning of the school year or signing it on each individual assignment. Other proactive methods for preventing cheating involve using multiple versions of exams, requiring appropriate space between seats in the exam room, having the exam proctor frequently move through the exam room to observe students, denying the use of electronics during the exam, and formulating policies with students, and more.

### **Rationale**

Preventing academic dishonesty is necessary as some studies have found that all students have cheated at least once during their collegiate career (Parameswaran & Devi, 2006). Initially, instructors are taught preventative methods for academic dishonesty and are encouraged to follow their academic institution's policies for handling guilty students. However, these strategies and consequences are often blanket approaches meant for the average student. There are many reasons why students cheat (Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006); thus, using only a handful of deterrents will likely fail to discourage all from participating. This means it is critical for

educators to use effective procedures to address their students' individual rationales for academic dishonesty.

Likewise, prescribed repercussions may not address these justifications; thus, students are at risk of engaging in dishonest behaviors again, both in their class and potentially in their careers as well (Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Tippitt et al., 2009).

Reactions such as awarding no credit for the assignment or giving the student a detention or suspension are common consequences (Tippitt et al., 2009), but teachers should identify their students' reasons for cheating so their response can redirect those beliefs (Kiehl, 2006). Effectively teaching expectations for academic honesty will be more successful in correcting negative behaviors and reducing the likelihood of repetition from those students.

### **Definition of Terms**

The following are common terms used in the paper. The first term is "academic dishonesty," which is any behavior that involves but is not limited to completing an assessment by illegally using notes and/or past assessments, collaborating with another person to give and/or receive help, plagiarizing sources, improperly citing sources, or lying to earn extra time to complete the assignment as outlined by the teacher and/or school. "Plagiarism" specifically refers to the action of completing an assessment by copying a source without proper citation, though it, "academic dishonesty," and "cheating" are often used interchangeably in the paper. The opposite of these is "academic honesty," or any behavior used to complete an assessment that correctly follows the parameters of the teacher and/or school.

Next is an “assessment,” which is usually an exam, essay, or research paper, but is also used to describe any assignment for a class. Assessments are sometimes referred to as “assignment” or “classwork” in the paper instead and are divided into two types: “formative assessments” and “summative assessments.” Formative assessments informally measure a student’s understanding of the course content and is usually ungraded or a minor part of a student’s final grade. Meanwhile, summative assessments formally measure a student’s understanding of course content and is usually a major part of a student’s final grade.

Many studies in the paper used a survey where respondents were required to select a choice on a “Likert scale.” The respondent selects an answer on a continuum of  $n$  choices, usually where 1 represents a low or no occurrence while  $n$  represents a high occurrence.

Finally, “online classes” or “online learning” and “remote classes” or “remote learning” both refer to the completion of course requirements without attending classes and exams while physically in the classroom. The classes are completed using the Internet specifically in online classes whereas remote classes are not necessarily completed online, but the terms are used interchangeably in the paper.

### **Research Focus**

Academic dishonesty can occur in any school. However, exams and grades are typically viewed as having more importance at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Therefore, the research for this paper was primarily limited to students and staff in high schools and universities.

Additionally, there is plentiful research on how students cheat and their frequency of participating in these behaviors, but there is not as much data on their justifications for cheating, effective preventative strategies and consequences, and what to do if those strategies and consequences are not effective in deterring students from cheating again in the future. Likewise, educators typically learn and/or are aware of cursory reasons why students are academically dishonest, but there is evidence that students' justifications for cheating are more complex than just wanting a better grade in their class.

One current event relevant to this paper is the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused many schools in the United States to switch to or offer an online option for classes. Many educators did not have experience teaching online and weren't given much training before being thrust into a virtual leadership role, and teaching students that weren't physically in the classroom brought new challenges, especially if those classes were asynchronous. With surveillance being more difficult while remote, maintaining academic honesty was challenging, especially with little research available to aid experienced teachers.

Therefore, there are multiple research questions that this paper seeks to answer. First, what are the justifications used by students to explain why they cheat? Second, what are effective strategies and consequences used by educators to prevent academic dishonesty? Third, if a student is caught cheating, what can be done to reduce the likelihood of this student cheating again? Finally, what can be done to combat academic dishonesty in the remote setting?

## **CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Literature Search Procedures**

This chapter reviews the published research on academic dishonesty and suggested methods for prevention. It begins with general information about the history and frequency of academic integrity and why cheating and plagiarism are problematic. The next section lists common methods utilized by students to improperly complete their classroom assignments and assessments, provides reasons why students cheat in their classes, how educators and academic institutions create environments that encourage academic dishonesty, and details the challenges faced by online classes and distance learning. The chapter concludes with a focus on preventative tactics so educators can implement proactive strategies to discourage future academic dishonesty in their classes.

The reviewed articles and studies were obtained through searches of ERIC, JSTOR, and EBSCO MegaFILE. Search terms and phrases used were “academic dishonesty,” “academic integrity,” “academic cheating,” “online academic dishonesty,” “reasons cheating,” “justification academic dishonesty,” and “prevention academic dishonesty.”

### **Background of Academic Dishonesty**

Assessments are used by educators to track their students’ mastery of content in the class. Naturally, students who may not have sufficiently prepared for these assessments may look for other ways to complete their assignments or pass their exams in lieu of accepting subpar grades. Studies on academic dishonesty go back to the 1940s, when Drake (1941) found that roughly a quarter of surveyed students admitted to some

form of academic misconduct. However, evidence exists that plagiarism occurred as long ago as Shakespearean times when theater troupes would perform plays without crediting the original author. Additionally, copyright law was first established in the United Kingdom in 1662 following the invention of the printing press (Granitz & Loewy, 2006), showing that society increasingly valued proper attribution for created works centuries ago.

Granitz and Loewy (2006) further acknowledged that in Western culture, plagiarism is generally despised in academics and its prevention is important as unethical behaviors in school often correlate to unethical behaviors outside of school, including in the guilty party's future career (Tippitt et al., 2009), and because students struggled to recall the classroom material when cheating (Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020). Farisi (2013) noted that a strong positive correlation had been found between academic dishonesty and a student's justification/neutralization of responsibility, further demonstrating the relationship between a student's negative behaviors inside and outside the classroom. He added that this might be why students often report cheating behaviors as morally wrong but still engage in the behaviors anyway.

It is not fully clear how often cheating occurs. When studying a single assignment, it could virtually never happen (0.4% of in-person students) (Lucky et al., 2017), whereas some surveys about any academically dishonest behaviors during one's educational career yielded admissions by 68.1% of students (Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996) or even all students (Parameswaran & Devi, 2006). Hollinger and Lanza-Kaduce (1996) warned that academic dishonesty might be more prevalent than instructors and

schools initially believe, as students are more likely to report helping others than reveal their own cheating (Tatum et al., 2018), and Tee and Curtis (2018) also believed cheating had occurred more frequently since 2016. With online remote learning becoming more popular, enhanced preventative methods are becoming more necessary as students take advantage of distance learning's remote and often asynchronous nature (Farisi, 2013); plus, some students do not see online classes as valid learning environments and thus do not consider cheating to be a concerning behavior (Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020). Therefore, it is imperative that educators and academic institutions are cognizant that cheating does occur and what can be done to prevent it.

### **How and Why Students Cheat**

While not all students engage in academically dishonest behaviors, many do look for advantages in completing their assessments. Some behaviors are common and easy to predict, but students are still finding new ways to cheat in their classes, especially with the increased prevalence of distance learning. Their motivations may simply be to earn a better grade, but educators need to be aware that there are many reasons that cause students to cheat, and it is possible that instructors and academic institutions have beliefs, actions, and/or policies that may encourage these negative behaviors as well.

### **Methods of Academic Dishonesty**

Most educators are aware of the common types of cheating, such as using crib notes (either written on paper or on one's body), sharing or receiving answers with classmates, and collecting exams from past years in a class to aid in studying. Students

may also fake an illness to deliberately skip the testing period of an exam, allowing them additional time to study before completing the makeup test (Brown, 2002; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Tippitt et al., 2009). Specifically, Hollinger and Lanza-Kaduce (1996) surveyed 1,672 students in 27 classes from a large unnamed Southeastern public university in the fall of 1989 and found students often received help from another student or source (46.7% of students) or plagiarized work (37.7% of students), with the single most common issue being failure to cite a source properly (33.3% of students). They also acknowledged that students were less likely to study past copies of exams or use or submit another classmate's published work as their own, as less than 10% of students reported engaging in any one of these behaviors.

In a meta-analysis of past studies, Farisi (2013) categorized the types of dishonest behaviors in several groupings. First, he described six main types of cheating: lack of citations, fabricating information, inaccurate portrayals of facts, false representation, deliberate failure to follow directions, and giving/receiving help. He then separated these six into two larger groups: planned cheating (intent to perform the dishonest behavior occurred before the assessment) and panic cheating (the behavior was not premeditated but occurred during the assessment). Additionally, he noted that the University of Sydney classified cheating in two ways. The first was "negligent or unintentional plagiarism," such as incorrectly citing the source for written work. The other was "dishonest or intentional plagiarism," or taking credit for another person's work.



Likewise, Parameswaran and Devi (2006) surveyed engineering students through interviews and observations at an unspecified university and sorted the students' cheating behaviors into several group roles reminiscent of the first humans: gatherers, or students who searched for classroom help before an assessment; hunters, or those that searched for aid as soon as the assessment was assigned; and scavengers, the students who looked for help after starting the assignment up until the deadline. The researchers found that most of the 55 students did not cheat on their lab reports during their first year due to a lack of awareness of the regularity of cheating at the school or having a lack of contacts in the school. However, all students admitted to plagiarizing at least one lab report while at the university. These students also acknowledged that they found their professors and teaching assistants to be unhelpful, but the lab technicians were valuable resources for completing their reports, including giving suggestions to students on how to reduce the chances of getting caught.

Another study focused on 267 remote and 999 in-person entomology students at the University of Florida between the spring of 2013 and the fall of 2017. These students had to provide insect samples from various regions, and unbeknownst to the students, the researchers marked the specimens with invisible ink before returning the samples. Insect samples in subsequent classes were then checked for the ink markings after submission to see if they had been submitted in a prior class. In this case, only about 2% of students were caught resubmitting samples or erroneously reporting facts about the submitted samples (Lucky et al., 2019). This reaffirmed Hollinger's and Lanza-Kaduce's

(1996) findings that students were less likely to use past exams for cheating, perhaps due to a lack of contacts from the same class in previous semesters.

### **Reasons and Justifications for Participation in Academic Dishonesty**

Students participate in academic dishonesty for many reasons. On the surface, students may cheat to earn better grades or a higher GPA (Bayaa Martin Saana et al., 2016; Farisi, 2013), to remain academically competitive with their peers (Brown, 2002; Farisi, 2013; Tippitt et al., 2009), due to pressure from their family or guardians to perform well in school (Bayaa Martin Saana et al., 2016), or to match their ideal self-image (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017). Also, they may not have been adequately prepared for their assessment (Tippitt et al., 2009) or to hide their lack of knowledge and/or avoid the embarrassment of failure (Lucky et al., 2019), and thus may deliberately skip an exam to make it up at another time (Carpenter et al., 2002). Related, students may care more about their end goal of passing the class or earning their degree rather than the learning itself (Brown-Wright et al., 2012; Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020; McCabe & Treviño, 1996).

Beyond that, students may show a lack of awareness or denial that academic dishonesty is wrong (Farisi, 2013; Kiehl, 2006; Tippitt et al., 2009) and may even label these behaviors as unethical but not actual cheating (Carpenter et al., 2002). One source of hypocrisy is that collaboration is not seen as cheating, as many careers require and encourage their employees to work together on projects (McCabe & Treviño, 1996). Additionally, schools and/or educators may not clearly define cheating, leading to the

students' confusion about what constitutes academically dishonest behavior (Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Tatum et al., 2018).

**Self-justification.** While some reasons for academic dishonesty may be obvious, there are other contributing factors towards causing a student's negative behaviors on assessments. Students may recognize that cheating or plagiarism are negative behaviors but will reason with themselves to justify that their actions are warranted (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Granitz & Loewy, 2006). Their arguments can stem from their attitudes towards their teacher and/or their class. For example, a student may cheat if there is a belief that the assessment is unimportant or irrelevant (Brown, 2002). Feelings of dissatisfaction, believing that class activities and assessments were disorganized and/or unclear, a lack of personalization in the class, and a lack of connection with the instructor (Tatum et al., 2018), including feeling unvalued or disrespected (Brown-Wright et al., 2012), were other reasons given by students. Likewise, they feel cheating is necessary to level the playing field when they consider a class or assessment too difficult (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013). Another issue is when students feel their teachers and/or institutions seemingly value their performance more than their learning (Brown-Wright et al., 2012; Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020; Liebler, 2015, Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013).

Additionally, O'Rourke et al. (2010) suggested that students are more likely to cheat if they are aware that their classmates are cheating, which was confirmed in other studies (McCabe & Treviño, 1993; Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013; Tatum et al., 2018). Students are also more likely to engage in academically dishonest behavior if they

believe their instructors or educational institutions do not care about preventing these behaviors or believe they will not be caught (Brown, 2002; Farisi, 2013; O'Rourke et al., 2010), which then creates a snowballing effect where cheating becomes more rampant. This is especially problematic as it has been shown that people that engage in negative behaviors become desensitized and are more likely to engage in similar negative behaviors in the future (Fida et al., 2018), demonstrating that students will continue cheating if there are no deterrents or consequences.

Meanwhile, many studies have sought to look for psychological justifications for cheating beyond the most common reasons. Granitz and Loewy (2006) surveyed students who were caught plagiarizing at a large anonymous West Coast university, who were then referred to the school's dean of students to be formally charged with plagiarism. These students were required to discuss their reasons for cheating and were given a punishment, such as writing an essay detailing the consequences of academic dishonesty. Since a person's natural tendency is to serve their self-interest (Shalvi et al., 2012), the researchers looked at six theories to gain more understanding of why students cheat on assessments and categorized the students' reasonings into these theories: deontology, utilitarianism, rational self-interest, Machiavellianism, cultural relativism, and situational ethics. Granitz and Loewy were confident enough that students provided enough hints towards their reasons for cheating to meaningfully inform their instructors even though the students may not have revealed their true justifications in the survey.

Deontology is the belief of always doing what is morally right. In this justification system, students who plagiarize claim innocence as they are not aware of any wrongdoing, either from their own actions or from a misunderstanding of what constitutes plagiarism. Therefore, it is believed that students with a low deontic justice value system are more likely to participate in academic dishonesty (Akbaşlı et al., 2019). Granitz and Loewy found this was the most common reason cited by students for cheating, as 41.8% of students either acknowledged they were unaware of the expectations for their assignment and/or expressed immediate remorse upon being charged with plagiarism.

With utilitarianism, students weigh the pros and cons of their decision to cheat and how it will affect all parties involved (Brown-Wright et al., 2012; Granitz & Loewy, 2006). Plagiarism occurs if these students feel their decision is ultimately a net positive for themselves, such as their benefit of academic success is worth the risk of upsetting their instructor if caught. This justification system was tied for the least commonly studied by Granitz and Loewy, as only 5.7% of students who plagiarized suggested this line of thinking guided their actions.

Compared to utilitarianism, rational self-interest instead focuses on how academically dishonest behavior will benefit all parties rather than having a net benefit for the cheater alone. Here, students believe that their dishonest behavior aids both themselves and the person(s) that otherwise would be harmed (Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013). Examples are that these actions give exposure to the plagiarized author's work, or their higher grade reflects favorably on their instructor. Like

utilitarianism, this was one of the most uncommon reasoning theories, as 5.7% of surveyed students revealed these beliefs.

The most concerning justification may be Machiavellianism, as these students are the most egocentric and do not care how their actions affect others (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017). In this case, students take pride in their ability to outwit their teachers and refuse to take accountability for their actions, blaming others if they end up getting caught. Shalvi et al. (2012) stated that people naturally act to serve their self-interest, and of added concern is that students have become more Machiavellian over time (Webster & Harmon, 2002), making it more difficult to reform repeat offenders. The university studied by Granitz and Loewy had 18.4% of offending students show these tendencies, making it the third-most represented justification system.

In cultural relativism, students consider their own societal norms when faced with the potential for participating in academically dishonest actions. Granitz and Loewy noted that Western cultures generally disapprove of cheating, but this may not be the case in other cultures (Bayaa Martin Saana et al., 2016; Granitz & Loewy, 2006), causing a lack of awareness that cheating is wrong. In a study of 2,357 online and face-to-face students between two American and four Israeli universities, Peled et al. (2019) hypothesized that Israeli students would be less likely to participate in academic dishonesty compared to the American students, as Israeli culture encourages a person to avoid risk. Brown (2002) agreed as American students seem to believe that cheating is normal in American society.

To test this hypothesis, Peled and colleagues surveyed the students on their likelihood of participating in academically dishonest behaviors using a five-point Likert scale. While the chance of participating in these negative actions was roughly identical between cultures (standard deviation of American students: 0.65; the standard deviation of Israeli students: 0.63), Israeli students were twice as likely to report a classmate's cheating behavior (57% to 28%). In Granitz and Loewy's study, they found that 8.5% of students involved in plagiarism revealed tendencies of cultural relativism.

The final category identified by Granitz and Loewy was situational ethics. In this case, unique circumstances caused the student to knowingly participate in academic dishonesty, creating the scavenger-type of participant as defined by Parameswaran and Devi (2006). A lack of preparedness, leading to additional pressure due to a time constraint, is one example of causation (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Tippitt et al., 2009).

Other possibilities may be the student forgot the due date of the assignment, had outside influences prevent them from completing the assignment honestly, such as an emergency, and more. Granitz and Loewy found this was the second-most common justification for cheating, as 19.9% of students revealed that unusual circumstances led to their behavior.

**Home-school dissonance and motivation.** Another study was conducted by Brown-Wright et al. (2012) that sought to find a connection between home-school dissonance and amotivation along with a student's likeliness to cheat in school.

According to Brown-Wright et al., home-school dissonance is the disparity between a student's values learned at home versus their values learned at school. As

Chiesl (2007) suggested, students learn to lie, cheat, and/or rationalize certain behaviors from their parents, whereas these are values that typically are discouraged in schools. Meanwhile, amotivation was defined as any behavior that does not lead to achieving an intended goal (Brown-Wright et al., 2012). In other words, amotivated people fail to see a connection between their actions and the resulting outcomes (Guay et al., 2000).

Brown-Wright et al. (2012) wanted to know if the prevalence of home-school dissonance was a predicting factor of amotivation and/or academic dishonesty for students while studying other potential relationships as well. The importance of researching home-school dissonance was that there was no significant difference in prevalence according to race, and students with high home-school dissonance were more likely to report low levels of self-esteem, have a lower grade point average, and had less hope for future success.

Brown-Wright et al. began with a meta-analysis of motivations that may cause students to cheat. According to their research, there are multiple theories that explain a person's motivation for engagement in academic dishonesty. The first is deterrence theory, where a person's past experiences with punishment or punishment avoidance impacts that person's decisions. This can be split up into general deterrence, where the discipline of one offender is used as sufficient prevention of similar future actions from others, and specific deterrence, where the discipline is intended to stop the offender from repeating the same crime (Onwudiwe et al., 2004). Students are less likely to cheat if they feel they might be caught (Henning et al., 2014; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Farisi, 2013), hence why specific deterrence is considered effective.



Another theory of motivation from Brown-Wright et al. was rationale choice theory. Just like utilitarianism (Granitz & Loewy, 2006), students weigh the pros and cons of cheating before making the decision of potential engagement. Next was social bond theory, where a student is academically dishonest due to a loss of connection to their instructor and/or school. This eroding relationship may be caused by poor course design, making the student feel the class or instructor is unfair (Akbaşlı et al., 2019; Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006; Tatum et al., 2018).

Brown-Wright et al. also named two other theories that contribute to a person's motivation, though they did not explain the theories in detail. The first was social strain theory, which is characterized by the person being pressured to engage in criminal behavior due to exposure to negative relationships or being treated differently from that person's own expectations (Agnew, 1992). This might be caused by the demand to earn good grades from family members or guardians (Bayaa Martin Saana et al., 2016) and/or pressure to cheat due to competition with their classmates (Brown, 2002; Brown-Wright et al., 2012; Tippitt et al., 2009). The second theory was differential association theory, where a person's behavior is determined by having connections to others participating in similar behaviors (Rebellion et al., 2010). Studies have already shown that students are more likely to cheat if they believe their classmates are cheating (Farisi, 2013; McCabe & Treviño, 1993; Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013; Tatum et al., 2018) and that they don't believe collaboration is cheating in the first place (McCabe & Treviño, 1996). This also ties to Granitz and Loewy's (2006) research of cultural relativism, where some cultures are more accepting of academic dishonesty.

In their research, Brown-Wright et al. (2012) looked at types of motivation as well. In addition to amotivation, they also reported Deci and Ryan's (1985, 2000) definitions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as causation of students' behaviors. Intrinsic motivation occurs when the person is driven by personal satisfaction or enjoys participation in an activity, while a person exhibits extrinsic motivation if they complete an activity to accomplish a certain goal or receive a reward (Peled et al., 2019). Types of intrinsic motivation include motivation to know, motivation to accomplish things, and motivation to experience stimulation. According to Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000), a person's motivation to know entails the pride in attempting a new pursuit or learning a new skill. Motivation to accomplish describes a person's pleasure of participating in accomplishing a task. Lastly, motivation to experience stimulation involves the person joining in the project to feel exhilaration.

As for extrinsic motivation, Brown-Wright et al. (2012) listed three types as well: external regulation, introjected regulation, and identified regulation. For external regulation, the person is motivated to complete the task based on any rewards for completion or penalties for failure of completion. Introjected regulation is driven by the expectations of others, such as feeling guilt due to others' expectations (Guay et al., 2000) or maintaining ego or pride (Peled et al., 2019). Meanwhile, identified regulation was the behavior dictated by other external factors and is seen by the person as being chosen on their own (Guay et al., 2000). Peled et al. (2019) added that identified motivation is exhibited when the task has personal significance but is not considered enjoyable by the individual.

In the study done by Brown-Wright et al. (2012), they found that academic dishonesty appeared to occur less often when the student displayed high intrinsic motivation, which was the same conclusion by Peled et al. (2000). However, it has been shown that students may be thrill-seekers and get a rush of adrenaline from cheating (Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Tippitt et al., 2009), which describes motivation to experience stimulation from Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000). Meanwhile, the first two types of extrinsic motivation did not show relations to academic persistence, though Vallerand et al. (1993) found that identified regulation correlated positively to academic persistence.

This makes sense as Guay et al. (2000) stated that identified regulation is on the higher end of self-determination compared to external regulation; thus, students are more likely to work through any issues faced with their assessments when exhibiting identified regulation rather than resorting to academic dishonesty. Brown-Wright et al. (2012) also discovered that amotivation is negatively correlated with academic persistence, as students who see their efforts as meaningless are not likely to persevere in their attempts to complete their assignments.

Following the meta-analysis, Brown-Wright et al. described the methods and results of their study. This study surveyed 344 students from two randomly selected high schools in the Southeastern United States. The Academic Motivation Scale: College Version, Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scale, Cheating Behavior, and Dissonance Between Home and School surveys, using either five-point or seven-point Likert scales, were administered to students over a 45-minute period. The results were studied to determine if there were relationships between a student's home-school dissonance,

amotivation, academic dishonesty, gender, ethnicity, and class rank. Brown-Wright et al. determined that a positive relationship existed between home-school dissonance and amotivation ( $r = .29$ ), home-school dissonance versus academic dishonesty ( $r = .21$ ), and amotivation and academic dishonesty ( $r = .27$ ). At the same time, it was found that race ( $r = .06$ ), gender ( $r = -.06$ ), and class rank ( $r = -.09$ ) had low correlations with academic dishonesty.

Though positive relationships were identified between home-school dissonance, amotivation, and academic dishonesty, Brown-Wright et al. acknowledged that they merely found correlations and not causations between the variables. Additionally, despite mentioning various theories and types of motivations, they did not pinpoint any specific motivational attributes displayed by the survey recipients other than amotivation. Guay et al. (2000) ordered intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, external regulation, and amotivation as relating highest to lowest to academic persistence, respectively. Therefore, more characteristics of the students in the study by Brown-Wright et al. would have been useful in identifying more specific reasons for the choice of engagement in academic dishonesty.

**Academic dishonesty via online classes.** Although online classes have become more prevalent, especially since the spring of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, distance learning has existed since the 1800s. Kentnor (2015) found the first evidence of distance learning appeared as an advertisement in the Boston Gazette in 1728, offering lessons to be mailed to the student on how to write shorthand. However, the first true distance learning class is attributed to Isaac Pitman in Bath, England in 1840, conducted

through written communication. Postcards were sent to students asking them to transcribe Bible passages into shorthand writing, and students were to return their work by mail for grading. In the 1870s, Illinois Wesleyan College became the first school to offer the opportunity to earn degrees through distance learning, and the popularity of remote classes rapidly increased as the Internet became common in households (Kentnor, 2015).

During the 2017-2018 school year, roughly 19% of all United States grade schools offered some sort of fully online course (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.). In the fall of 2019, 37.2% of postsecondary students were enrolled in a distance learning course, including a staggering 73.3% of private for-profit students (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic caused far more schools and students to adopt online classes in 2020 (Chakraborty et al., 2020), with 72.8% of postsecondary students taking a virtual course in the fall of 2020 (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). This rapid adoption of distance learning brought new challenges in combating academic dishonesty for educators and academic institutions.

Distance learning already carries a perception that academic dishonesty is more rampant compared to in-person learning (Lucky et al., 2019). In researching other studies, Sileo and Sileo (2008) found multiple causes for academic dishonesty in an online setting. First, they noted that students could have private conversations with each other, which makes them more likely to share answers on assessments than in in-person classes (Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020). This is especially problematic because

many students don't see collaboration as cheating (Sileo & Sileo, 2008), a sentiment confirmed by 61% of students in a study by Tatum et al. (2018).

Sileo and Sileo (2008) also found that online courses can have more class requirements, causing students to spend additional time working on assignments compared to their non-online peers, sometimes by giving students early access to their assessments. Considering the accessibility of the Internet, along with the assumption that instructors are less familiar with technology than students (Granitz & Loewy, 2006), this additional time might be used for cheating. Students value speed in completing their online courses (Magda et al., 2020) and thus may turn to cheating due to laziness or poor time management, according to 7% and 12%, respectively, of 433 pharmacy and medical students surveyed by Henning et al. (2014).

Loneliness and a lack of face-to-face contact with teachers and peers appeared to be contributing factors to academic dishonesty as well (Sileo & Sileo, 2008). Altogether, these elements can cause distance learning to appear to be a less valid learning environment than completing classes in person (Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020), although Magda et al. (2020) found through surveys that 79% of recently, currently, or eventually enrolled online university students felt their online classes were equivalent or better than their in-person classroom experience.

Unfortunately for educators, reducing cheating online can be challenging, as outlined by Chiesl (2007). First, some options for stopping students may not be practical. For example, Turnitin, an online plagiarism detection program, is not useful for courses that lack writing components such as mathematics. Second, while Olt (2002) suggested

changing log-in passwords for accessing assessments or using programs that monitor students' time, duration, and the number of attempts to complete an assignment, Chiesl (2007) believed this might be too technologically intensive for instructors or too expensive to purchase. Olt (2002) advised that teachers should frequently change the curriculum and use multiple versions of assessments as well, but Chiesl (2007) responded that this might be inefficient for instructors. That is not to say that prevention of online cheating is impossible, but it can be more difficult than thwarting similar behaviors from physically present students in the classroom.

**Instructor and institutional actions that foster academic dishonesty.** Although students are the primary guilty party when it comes to academic dishonesty, sometimes teachers and schools contribute by maintaining environments that encourage cheating behaviors. Pervasive academic dishonesty can be caused when students feel disconnected from their class or instructor (Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020) due to poor class design (Parameswaran & Devi, 2006), which may manifest as the use of substandard teaching methods (Liebler, 2015; McCabe & Treviño, 1993; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006; Tatum et al., 2018), unclear directions for assignments (McCabe & Treviño, 1993), little personalization for students (Liebler, 2015), and the feeling that the instructor and/or institution values grades over learning and mastering the content (Brown-Wright et al., 2012; Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020; Liebler, 2015; McCabe & Treviño, 1996; Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013). Perceived insignificance of an assignment made students place less value on their work as well, either from its lack of relevance to the content or from being a minor factor in the overall grade

(Parameswaran & Devi, 2006), and courses that focused on memorization and recall were also at fault for causing academic dishonesty (Eraslan, 2011). As McCabe and Treviño (1993) described, these factors cause students to believe they are in direct competition with their teachers and thus need to cheat to balance the fairness of the class (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013).

Cheating has also been more common when the teacher and/or school has shown leniency towards academic dishonesty (Akbaşlı et al., 2019; Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996). In Parameswaran and Devi's (2006) observations of engineering labs, they noted the labs were supervised by teaching assistants and lab technicians rather than faculty. The teaching assistants were typically graduate students at the university, while the lab technicians' primary responsibility was to prepare and provide the appropriate lab equipment for the students. The researchers observed that neither type of supervisor appeared interested in monitoring academic integrity during the labs, and in some cases, even gave advice to students on how to avoid detection of plagiarism (Parameswaran & Devi, 2006). This appeared to be a case where the professors either did not communicate expectations of academic integrity or had their expectations ignored by the teaching assistants and lab technicians, posing a problem since students are more likely to cheat when their instructors fail to act to prevent academic dishonesty (Liebler, 2015; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006).

The presence and implementation of an honor code impacts academic dishonesty as well. An honor code is a pledge signed by the student confirming that academically dishonest behaviors were not utilized in the completion of the assessment. McCabe and



Treviño (1993) wanted to test five hypotheses by studying universities with and without honor codes: cheating would occur less often at schools with an honor code; academic dishonesty was more frequent when students didn't understand and/or didn't accept their school's honor code and other academic integrity policies; academic dishonesty would increase if the student had no fear of being reported by a classmate; academic dishonesty would be more frequent if the students believed their school had lax consequences for cheating, and academic dishonesty would be more frequent when students believed their peers were successfully cheating. The researchers surveyed 6,096 students across 31 U.S. colleges and universities with and without honor codes, asking students to rate their answers on a four- or five-point Likert scale along with identifying whether their school had an honor code.

While the researchers confirmed their hypotheses on a macro level, the survey also yielded an intriguing juxtaposition between two individual schools. A school without an honor code recorded a low rate of self-reported academic dishonesty, while a high rate of self-reported cheating occurred at one of the institutions with a long history of having an honor code. McCabe and Treviño discovered the school without the honor code had featured its expectations of academic integrity prominently during new student orientation meetings and in its student handbook, along with ensuring the academic policies were understood by students. In contrast, the honor code school with the unusually high rate of cheating had students admitting they didn't understand the student pledge well, plus the school administrator in charge of applying the honor code revealed the school had spent less time explaining and enforcing its oath of academic

integrity in recent years (McCabe & Treviño, 1993). This difference highlights the importance of clearly communicating honor code policies and what defines cheating to students (Tatum et al., 2018) since it is possible that students do not have a firm understanding of their school's expectations of academic integrity (Bayaa Martin Saana et al., 2016; Burrus et al., 2007; Tatum et al., 2018).

A survey from Tatum et al. (2018) helps quantify this claim, involving 928 students from a total of 12 public and private U.S. colleges and universities, either without honor codes or with modified honor codes. The researchers excluded schools with traditional honor systems from their study due to a struggle to identify institutions and an unwillingness of these institutions to participate in the survey. Traditional honor codes were defined as "including an honor pledge, dual-responsibility, a requirement to report oneself and others, a requirement for faculty to turn over all suspected cases, and a student-run adjudication system" (p. 304). Meanwhile, modified honor codes contained at least one but not all criteria.

The students read eight scenarios involving academic dishonesty and were to respond on a five-point Likert scale with the degree of academic integrity involved and their likelihood of reporting the behavior to their professor or school based on their school's guidelines. The students then were asked related questions about cheating from a survey written by Burrus et al. (2007), including their understanding of their school's policies for academic integrity. A startling 20.4% (189 of 928) of the total respondents reported a lack of knowledge regarding their institution's severity of consequences for academic dishonesty. Although Tatum et al. did not share the number

of these students at modified honor code schools compared to the schools without an honor code, they did find that students interpreted their modified honor code school had slightly more severe consequences for academic dishonesty than the perceived consequences by non-honor code students with their respective schools (1.69 vs. 1.84, respectively, on a four-point Likert scale with choices 1 – severe, 2 – moderate, 3 – mild, 4 – don't know).

Despite the perceived severity, the students at modified honor code schools reported a higher rate of cheating than at non-honor code schools. Tatum et al. noted this finding differed from research by McCabe et al. (2002) but suggested it could have been due to students at the modified honor code schools having a better understanding of the definition of academic dishonesty and thus were able to report more instances of occurrence (Tatum et al., 2018).

Similarly, Bayaa Martin Saana et al. (2016) surveyed 131 students at Wa Polytechnic (now Wa Technical University) in Wa, Ghana, due to a rash of student expulsions involving academic dishonesty at the time. Although 121 of 131 students (92.37%) reported receiving instruction of their school's academic dishonesty policies, only 40 of the 131 students (30.53%) had a "high" understanding of these expectations and consequences and just 24 students (18.32%) had "high" support for these regulations. Bayaa Martin Saana et al. noted that instructors at the school formed their own statutes for academic dishonesty with little to no input from students, which likely impacted the lack of understanding from students.

Additionally, Bayaa Martin Saana et al. surveyed the students that admitted engaging in academic dishonesty on their types of participation and severity beliefs of cheating. Using a four-point Likert scale (1 – never, 2 – once, 3 – more than once, 4 – not applicable), they found that students copied their classmates' work with permission or had their own work copied most often, with average scores of 1.98 (standard deviation = 0.90) and 2.24 (SD = 0.89), respectively. When asked on a two-point Likert scale (1 – not serious, 2 – serious) about the severity of these actions, the students demonstrated little concern for these actions, tallying respective mean severity scores of 1.19 (SD = 0.40) and 1.32 (SD = 0.47). Meanwhile, the students demonstrated that asking or giving permission to copy was an important factor, as the students averaged a cheating score of 1.19 (SD = 0.58) for copying classwork without permission, with every single student responding this behavior was a "serious" offense. These results showed the Wa students did not fully understand the definition or gravity of cheating at their school, likely because the instructors had failed to properly educate the students about academically dishonest behaviors.

Other research has shown that students self-report instances of cheating more often when they have better knowledge of what actions count as cheating (Burrus et al., 2018; McCabe et al., 2002). Specifically, Burrus et al. (2018) surveyed 300 principles of economics students from The University of Richmond and the University of North Carolina Wilmington in the spring of 2000, requesting them to self-report their cheating and their perceptions of the frequency of cheating at their university before and after receiving a definition of academic dishonesty. They found that students self-reported an

average of 1.8 instances of academic dishonesty in the last 12 months prior to receiving a definition of cheating, which then increased to an average of 3.32 instances in the last calendar year after being given the comprehensive definition. Additionally, following the clarification of academic dishonesty, the percentage of students who participated in cheating at least once increased from 39% to 53%. Since many students felt their behaviors on assessments were not academically dishonest, it is important to provide a clear definition of academic integrity for students.

Another problem entails the underreporting of cheating by faculty members. In a survey comparing attitudes between schools with and without honor codes that included 789 professors from 16 U.S. colleges and universities, McCabe (1993) found that just 43% of the professors' primary reaction to a student cheating in their class involved reporting the incident to their school's jurisdiction for academic integrity. Additionally, only 40% of professors surveyed had reported a cheating incident to this authority in the past, which was acknowledged by Granitz and Loewy (2006) as well. However, it appeared that professors preferred to handle the occurrence of academic dishonesty themselves, as just 1% of the professors' responses involved ignoring the student's behavior. Likewise, 98% of professors in Parameswaran and Devi's (2006) research felt it was unethical to ignore strong evidence of cheating.

The disparity in the professors handling the situation without reporting to their academic institution was due to their beliefs that their school would not handle the situation appropriately, according to 30% of those at schools with honor codes and 20% of instructors at non-honor code institutions (McCabe, 1993). This demonstrated that

while instructors show an obligation to discipline students engaging in academic dishonesty, there may be inconsistent consequences, which would add to students' confusion about the penalties for getting caught (Burrus et al., 2018; McCabe & Treviño, 1993; McCabe et al., 2002; Tatum et al., 2018)

### **Prevention of Initial and Repeated Offenses of Academic Dishonesty**

Instructors and schools that hope to be successful in reducing academic dishonesty have many available tools at their disposal. While strict consequences may seem like the obvious deterrent, such as receiving a score of 0 or expulsion from the program or school (Tippitt et al., 2009), alternative proactive options include developing rapport with students (Garavalia et al., 2007; Sull, 2020; Tatum et al., 2018; Tippitt et al., 2009), clear class policies with justifiable rationales (Chiesl, 2007; Tippitt et al., 2009), and effective course design (Chiesl, 2007; Farisi, 2013; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006; Sileo & Sileo, 2008; Sull, 2020). It is also worthwhile to formulate policies collaboratively with students (Sileo & Sileo, 2008), as many researchers found students share effective approaches for combating cheating (Brown, 2002; Carpenter et al., 2002; Chiesl, 2007; Henning et al., 2014; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Tatum et al., 2018; Tippitt et al., 2009). While initial prevention of academic dishonesty is preferred, it is also essential that educators and academic institutions capably eliminate the reoccurrence of such behaviors from guilty students as well.

### **Short-Term Preventative Tactics**

Instructors and educational institutions typically have general preventative tactics for initial and repeat cases of academic dishonesty. In a study by Kiehl (2006)

where three instances of cheating occurred in a class at the University of Central Florida, the students had received a verbal warning from the professor and a written warning regarding academic dishonesty in the class syllabus at the beginning of the semester. The sharing of these policies is recommended by Sileo and Sileo (2008) too, and Granitz and Loewy (2006) add that there must be a consistent definition of cheating amongst educators within an academic institution. Additionally, it is recommended that cheating behaviors are clearly defined (Chiesl, 2007; Farisi, 2013; Lucky et al., 2019; O'Rourke et al., 2010; Sileo & Sileo, 2008; Tatum et al., 2018) as students may not understand or agree that their dishonest actions count as cheating (Tatum et al., 2018). Therefore, if the instructor's and/or school's definition of academic dishonesty is clear and understood by students, they are less likely to cheat (Sileo & Sileo, 2008).

The importance of a clear definition of cheating is evidenced by the research of Burrus et al. (2007). They surveyed 300 principles of economics students from the University of Richmond and the University of North Carolina in the spring of 2000, asking them about their perceptions of academic dishonesty and their own habits. Later in the survey, the students were given a clarification on the definition of cheating, and then were asked to share their personal experiences with cheating again. The researchers found the students reported an average of 1.8 instances of academic dishonesty in the past 12 months before receiving the researchers' definition, which then increased their self-reporting frequency to 3.32 times in the last 12 months. Therefore, it is necessary to immediately give a clear definition of academic dishonesty, so students are more aware of dishonest behaviors.

The first forms of academic dishonesty prevention also involve short-term plans leading up to or during an exam. Multiple proctors should be utilized, including using tenured or tenure-tracked faculty rather than teaching assistants as they are often students and less likely to police academic dishonesty (Chiesl, 2007; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006). Assigned seating in the exam room is one option (Tippitt et al., 2009), as to separate students who may be more willing to copy or share answers. Tippitt et al. (2009) and Farisi (2013) also recommended limiting students' access to personal electronic devices during exams.

As for the assessment itself, scrambling test questions, utilizing multiple versions of exams, and/or writing new exams regularly are other possibilities (Chiesl, 2007; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006; Tippitt et al., 2009). Chiesl (2007) added that using the textbook's exam software, if available, aids in creating multiple versions of exams. Writing test questions that are highly specific or refer directly to course materials are also suggested as they can be difficult to plagiarize (Farisi, 2013). If a writing assessment is being used, plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin is recommended (Chiesl, 2007; Farisi, 2013; Heckler et al., 2013), but Heckler et al. (2013) note that false positives were often detected, such as when a direct quote was properly cited from a textbook. Therefore, they recommended using online software to flag a potential violation, but not as foolproof evidence of plagiarism. Giving less time to complete the assessment is also suggested as it will reduce the time allowed for students to cheat (Chiesl, 2007; Shalvi et al., 2012).



### **Student Suggestions for Preventative Tactics**

One downside for teachers unilaterally determining class policies is that it suggests that students are not trusted (Tippitt et al., 2009). However, Erwin (2004) states that allowing students the opportunity to develop classroom rules is one of the most effective ways to give them a voice in the classroom, and thus this perceived distrust can be avoided if students are allowed to design the guidelines intended to discourage and penalize cheating and plagiarism. Tippitt et al. (2009) and Sileo and Sileo (2008) agree, stating that students should be involved in the honor code-writing process, including providing a clear definition of academic dishonesty.

In the spring of 1998, Brown (2002) surveyed 253 fourth semester associate degree nursing students and general baccalaureate nursing students at Pace University Lienhard School of Nursing. His survey included four yes/no questions about the students' personal experiences with cheating and three open-ended questions asking how students cheat, what would be effective in stopping academic dishonesty, and what consequences should be given to students caught cheating.

The students' suggestions for effective prevention involved the following: having more than one proctor in the exam room, especially to increase awareness when students were signaling answers to each other during the assessment; all personal items and books should be left in a separate part of the room; exams should not be reused and there should be multiple versions of the exam; students should not be allowed to leave the testing room; students should have assigned seats in the room; exams should

not be kept in the instructor's office; and students must be informed of the consequences if they are caught cheating.

Additionally, Brown highlighted seven consequences that were offered in the survey results: the guilty student should receive a verbal warning; receive a score of zero on the exam; should be given a new and potentially more difficult test; be placed on academic probation; receive automatic failure of the class; receive dismissal from the nursing program; and/or be expelled from the institution. Brown added that the most common consequences suggested were receiving a score of zero on the exam, removal from the nursing program, and expulsion from the school.

Brown stated that Pace University adopted the policies suggested by the students, along with frequent movement of the proctors in the exam room and a requirement to make eye contact with every student within the room during the exam. He lamented that there was no way to confirm if the new measures reduced academic dishonesty, though students did report fewer objections to classmates' cheating, a greater awareness of and observation of the new policies, and noticeable mutual respect between the students and professors.

Hollinger and Lanza-Kaduce (1996) carried out a similar survey in the fall of 1989. At a large university in the southeastern United States, they collected data from 1,672 students enrolled in 27 different classes. Ten questions asked the students how many times they participated in specific forms of academic dishonesty, and then asked to use a five-point Likert scale to identify the effectiveness of 20 tactics commonly used to

prevent cheating. The common deterrent methods were determined by a committee of over 20 faculty, Honor Court members, and students.

Among the 20 preventative measures, 81.6% of students agreed that scrambling test questions was effective in reducing academic dishonesty (defined as selecting either “effective” or “very effective” on the survey’s Likert scale), including 80.3% of students who had admitted to cheating earlier in the survey. This strategy was heavily preferred by students, as the second-most popular suggestion of smaller classes was nearly 12 percentage points less. Having several proctors in the exam room, using different exams for students absent on the original test date, and having multiple versions of the exam were also perceived to be effective by more than two-thirds of the students. They also felt receiving review sheets and/or past exams to study prior to the assessment date, along with receiving more essays than tests, would effectively alleviate students’ test anxiety.

Meanwhile, these students disputed the results from Brown’s (2002) survey, as assigned seats and the requirement to remain in the exam room during the test were judged to be effective by only 27% and 22% of students, respectively. Other preventative suggestions that also received low effectiveness scores were assigned topics for essays (30.2%), more exams with fewer take-home assignments (23.7%), and fewer exams with more take-home assignments (17.5%). The school also had a publicized phone number to call when reporting classmates that cheated, but the students felt that was the least-successful deterrent (16.0%), likely because about two-thirds of the students in the survey admitted to cheating at least once while at the

university and thus didn't want to tattle when they were guilty themselves. Finally, Hollinger and Lanza-Kaduce found that cheaters and non-cheaters never differed by more than seven percentage points when ranking the effectiveness of these measures, showing that academically honest and academically dishonest students had similar perceptions regarding successful inhibitory strategies.

Another survey was completed by Henning et al. (2014) involving 433 pharmacy and medical students at the University of Auckland in New Zealand. The students were initially given an 18-item questionnaire regarding justifications for engaging in academic dishonesty and were required to answer from "never true" to "always true" on a 6-point Likert scale. Afterwards, they were given three open-ended questions asking for other reasons students may perform academic dishonesty, reasons why students would remain academically honest, and any strategies they felt would reduce academic dishonesty.

Henning et al. found that about 91% of the suggestions from students involved external control by the faculty and/or school, whereas about 10% of suggestions regarded the students' internal control. Additionally, about 46% of responses involved proactive support from the instructor, while about 44% of responses involved surveillance and deterrent strategies. The researchers listed over 50 responses from students, with most being summed up in the following categories. Regarding proactive support from instructors, students requested clear definitions of academic dishonesty including explanations of borderline actions, additional help and resources for completing assignments should be offered to students, frequent reminders on how to

properly cite sources should be given, exam questions each year should be changed each year, and more effective course design should be utilized, which included clear expectations for assignments. As for surveillance strategies, the students recommended more proctors for exams, diligent surveillance, public acknowledgment when cheaters were caught, making students aware of strict consequences and enforcing those consequences, such as expulsion from the program, and enforcing dress codes and body searches so students couldn't hide personal items on their person.

### **Long-Term Preventative Tactics**

Although students have many useful suggestions for preventing academic dishonesty, they show tunnel vision in that effective measures must involve the exam, the exam room, and/or the proctor's behavior within the exam room. Instructors and institutions can adopt policies that are implemented regularly within their everyday classes that can reframe students' beliefs and desires for engaging in academic dishonesty prior to completing an assessment.

**Honor codes.** Effective honor codes that are clearly and repeatedly presented to students are recommended (Chiesl, 2007; Tippitt et al., 2009). An effective honor code that is consistently enforced has been shown to increase student perception that cheating occurs less often at that school and places more responsibility on the students to complete their work honestly (Tatum et al., 2018), and has been shown to reduce academic dishonesty as well (McCabe & Treviño, 1996). Students report suffering embarrassment from their peers, a negative impact on their relationship with professors, and betraying their professor's/school's trust as reasons why honor codes

work (McCabe & Treviño, 1996). However, for schools that have recently adopted an honor code, Roig and Marks (2006) note that implementation won't immediately reduce academic dishonesty, as it will take time for the new policies to be cemented in the school's culture.

The effectiveness of honor codes is reinforced by a study of young children from Evans et al. (2017). Ninety-nine Canadian children between the ages of 3 and 5 years old started by playing a game with the researchers where a toy was displayed on a table behind the child, and the child had to guess what the toy was based on a related noise that was played in the room, such as a horn honking for a toy car. After a few rounds, the researchers said they had to retrieve a storybook from another room and would set the next toy on the table behind the child, but the child was directed to refrain from looking at the toy. The children were separated into three test groups: requiring no response from the child, requiring the child's confirmation by nodding or saying "Okay" or "Yes," and confirmation from the child by stating, "I will not turn around and peek at the toy." When the researchers left the room, a noise unrelated to the toy's identity was played so they could not identify the toy without looking.

Although 70% of the children ultimately peeked at the toy, the researchers had encouraging results. The control group and group that gave a simple affirmation of obedience had about 80% each of the children peeking, but under 60% of the children looked after verbally stating they would follow orders. Additionally, the first two groups took about 4 and 6 seconds of waiting to peek, respectively, while the last group obliged for about 14 seconds before looking at the toy. While this experiment was conducted

with young children, it is possible that these results suggest why honor codes can be effective in schools, as they require students to acknowledge their compliance in remaining academically honest in their class.

**Course design.** Regarding course design, mistakes by faculty that increase the likelihood of academic dishonesty involving the class expectations, teaching materials, and assessments were provided earlier. With course design as the first line of defense (Heckler et al., 2013), a reimagining of the class assignments and requirements can help prevent cheating and plagiarism (Lucky et al., 2019; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006).

One option is to include alternate assessments (Farisi, 2013; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006; Tippitt et al., 2009) so students can prove mastery of course content and receive feedback without a significant impact on their grade. Some examples include more formative assessments (Tippitt et al., 2009), more project-based assessments (Farisi, 2013), more high-interest questions about students' personal experiences (Farisi, 2013; Sileo & Sileo, 2008), and more discussion questions and opportunities for peer-to-peer conversations (Sileo & Sileo, 2008), as they encourage creativity rather than memorization of facts (Farisi, 2013). Parameswaran and Devi (2006) recommended that classes with labs should cover all relevant content prior to lab dates, and to consider assigning videos and/or online lessons prior to labs if there is a concern that the content can't be taught in person beforehand. Additionally, they suggested that labs should be ungraded and to reuse lab questions on exams to reward students who completed their lab assignments fairly.

In a review of past studies, Tippitt et al. (2009) compiled suggestions for short-term and long-term strategies. While short-term options may be easier to enact, they imply that the teacher believes the students will cheat, negatively impacting the dynamic between instructor and pupil. Thus, consistent strategies over the full school year are beneficial as they involve modeling proper behavior and can build trust in the classroom.

Prevention of academic dishonesty should start on the first day of the course. Since students may question an instructor's qualifications for teaching a course, it is recommended to share one's degrees and experience to gain the students' trust early (Chiesl, 2007). Additionally, Tippitt et al. (2009) suggested a discussion of classroom rules and expectations, including ideas from students. Justification of these expectations should be frequently shared, so students understand their purpose and don't feel their existence is arbitrary. For example, the purpose, learning objectives, and evaluation criteria of assignments should be clearly communicated (Chiesl, 2007) so students don't believe the assessments are busywork and understand how they will be graded, and the value of attending class should be promoted, too (Tippitt et al., 2009). Students will also appreciate if the professor sets realistic deadlines and acknowledges events that students participate in outside of class, such as other classes, activities, sports, etc. while scheduling due dates for assignments and assessments. Likewise, deemphasizing the need to earn good grades will also be helpful (Chiesl, 2007).

In addition, talks of ethical practices are important, as well, especially for college students in career-specific classes, so moral and ethical issues should be incorporated



(Kolanko et al., 2006; Farisi, 2013; Tippitt et al., 2009). Tanner (2004) adds that there should be a culture of academic and professional integrity maintained in the course. Practicing academic integrity will be useful, such as giving the class opportunities to master source citation in preparation for assignments (Sileo & Sileo, 2008). Altogether, Tippitt et al. (2009) stated that these conversations should be a major theme for the entire course and revisited often.

Modeling appropriate behavior is important as well. An expectation that students must properly cite sources cannot be reinforced unless it is properly demonstrated in the class. This doesn't just mean defining what constitutes a proper citation, but also having educators hold themselves to the same standard. Therefore, instructors should be citing sources on their course materials as well, encouraging students to buy in to the importance of correctly attributing information in the class (Tippitt et al., 2009).

**Positive relationships with students.** Another big recommendation from Tippitt et al. (2009) involves building positive relationships with students. Since the researchers felt short-term preventative strategies imply distrust of students, they recommended forging trust and rapport with students throughout the term or school year. Garavalia et al. (2007) found that students are less likely to cheat when they feel their instructor is friendly, approachable, and respectful, and students in the study by Tatum et al. (2018) revealed they felt a lesser desire to cheat if they felt their instructor cared about them. This may be difficult to achieve in larger classes as they may feel more impersonal, so Tatum et al. adds that smaller classes are better for creating strong bonds with students.

## **Preventative Tactics in Virtual Classes**

The popularity of online classes increased significantly with the coronavirus outbreak in late 2019 and early 2020. Because of the pandemic, students may be feeling additional stress outside of their classes, which could negatively affect their academic performance and desire to remain academically honest in class. Forming connections with students is still important in this setting, and adjustments to assessments and course design can reduce the likelihood of academic dishonesty as well.

**Connecting with online students.** Continuing from the formation of strong relationships with students, Sull (2020) had suggestions specifically for online classes that can be adopted by in-person instructors as well. In a guide to teaching online during the COVID-19 pandemic, he offered the following suggestions to earn the trust of virtual students. First, students' trust can be gained by showing warmth and being understanding of their needs. Some students may be taking online classes for convenience or to avoid hazards from studying in person, such as harassment and/or bullying from peers, or to avoid contracting the coronavirus. Being a good listener and showing an interest in the students will be beneficial, which can be demonstrated by having constant communication. Frequent correspondences with students show that you are available and willing to help when necessary. Being organized is also useful, as it further shows that you are dependable to your class.

Incorporating humor into the class is also a must. This can make the teacher seem more approachable and friendly while online and can lighten the mood for students who may already be stressed from studying online. The instructor doesn't need

to entertain with jokes, though, as humor can be injected through class materials.

However, too much humor can detract from the course as students may become desensitized or will no longer take the class seriously. It is also important to be authentic with your students, as they can perceive when their instructor is factitious, which will cause them to lose respect for that teacher.

When determining deadlines for assignments, the instructor should also be aware of students' activities outside of their class, such as other classes, jobs, taking care of family, and more. Scheduling due dates that are flexible with the students' needs and being lenient with assignments can be helpful in developing rapport. Completing work for class may be challenging at times, especially in an asynchronous class, so it is recommended that videos and audio recordings should be kept to five minutes or less and can be replayed by students. Additionally, it is important to demonstrate good teaching practices such as clear examples and explanations to make it easier for students to understand the content in class. Finally, Sull recommended that instructors should know how to provide help or know where students may go to receive help when necessary for the class. Including these strategies in the classroom will help creating strong bonds with students, whether teaching virtually or face-to-face.

**Online course design.** Just like in-person classes, appropriate course design can also prevent academic dishonesty. In research to reduce academic dishonesty in online courses, Chiesl (2007) listed multiple effective options, starting with preparations before the first day of class. Frequent reminders through email, online postings, and other class materials for remaining academically honest were recommended, along with linking to

the school's honor code (if one exists) and sharing strict penalties in the class. Noting one's own professional qualifications for teaching the class is also useful, as students may want to attribute their own struggles and confusion to the professor's perceived teaching ability. Learning objectives and course requirements should be clearly stated to the students, including sharing the work necessary to pass the class.

Since exams were a primary concern, Chiesl gave proposals to diminish exam hitches from students. First, he mentioned creating multiple versions of assessments, which can be made easier by using the textbook's exam software. Second, students should be given the shortest time possible to complete their assessment, as that will reduce the opportunity time to search for answers through class and external resources. As allotting too little time is a concern, Chiesl recommended timing the prior year's students to determine the minimal time necessary to complete the same exam in following years. Next, it is beneficial to allow students a choice of days to complete the exam. Students often enroll in online classes for the ease of fitting in their coursework in their daily lives, and their schedules may not be able to accommodate a single exam time. Sileo and Sileo (2008) added that students should be required to keep their camera on while completing a test, so they can be observed if they attempt to cheat.

Students also may attempt to print out the exam to study questions over a longer period or have someone review the entire exam. Therefore, Chiesl suggested that only one question from the exam should be displayed at a time to make printing the full test more difficult. Likewise, students should not be allowed to return to previously-answered questions, as they may discover the correct answer later during

the exam period. Shuffling the chronological order of topics on the exam that were covered in the class to prevent students from following along in their notes and/or textbook. However, to remain fair to students, they should also be allowed to retake the exam multiple times with different sets of questions.

Chiesl's last pieces of advice involved the number of exams per term and the grade value of the exams. He felt that increasing the frequency of exams would reduce the likelihood of students reaching out to others for help, as it would be challenging for peers to be regularly available to aid during multiple exams. Additionally, this would reduce the individual weight of each exam, reducing stress about grades as a single test would not significantly affect their final score. For example, he specifically offered that each summative assessment should be weighted as just 5% of the overall grade.

As evidence that these adaptations were approved by students, Chiesl surveyed 149 online students at Indiana State University over a three-year period. Regarding the ability to take an exam multiple times, 81% of the students completed the exam two to four times, and an additional 10% of the students made more than four attempts. When asked about the importance of receiving multiple attempts on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "very important" to "not important," 86% of students responded with "very important" or "important." The students also believed the repeated attempts gave them a better understanding of the class content, as 63% of students felt they experienced more learning than in other online courses. As for the other policy changes, only 17% of students assumed that cheating would be more prevalent in this online

class compared to a typical in-person course, and just 3% thought that academic dishonesty would be more common compared to other online courses.

### **Reactive Tactics After a Student is Caught Cheating**

Despite these long-term preventative tactics, academic dishonesty may still occur. It is reasonable to believe that if a student cheats once, they may cheat again, or a classmate may also attempt to cheat (Fida et al., 2018). If a student is caught engaging in academic dishonesty, appropriate and effective reactions can help prevent future instances from occurring.

**General strategies for students caught cheating.** If a student is found to have cheated, it is recommended to publicly announce the discovery to the rest of the class, along with the consequences for getting caught (O'Rourke et al., 2010). If classmates perceive that an instructor did not notice one of their peers cheated, they will be more likely to participate in the future themselves. Therefore, the acknowledgment to the class notifies the students of the instructor's awareness of the initial incident and those others that partake are at risk of being caught as well. When a student is found to have cheated, reviewing the definition of plagiarism and how to properly cite sources is recommended (Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Tippett et. al., 2009), and that student should have the opportunity to redo the assignment honestly (Sileo & Sileo, 2008).

**Specific strategies to address the student's justification for cheating.** Even if the student is caught cheating, they may have personal beliefs or experiences about cheating that will lead to future episodes. Therefore, it is worthwhile to have a conversation with the student to identify their rationale for their academic dishonesty,

and thus determine the appropriate response to prevent that student from cheating again.

In Granitz and Loewy's (2006) justification systems, the deontological justification occurred when the student was unaware that they cheated. Here, the instructor should review the school's honor code (if relevant) with the student, and/or have the student sign a contract of honor for future assignments. The instructor should ensure they are acting as a role model, using proper citations in classroom materials (Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Tippett et al., 2009), and should also include assignments in the future that are difficult to plagiarize due to their specificity of content (Farisi, 2013; Granitz & Loewy, 2006). Additionally, plagiarism-detection software can be used to aid students in the completion of their rough drafts so they can correct any accidental citation errors before submitting their final version of the assignment (Granitz & Loewy, 2006).

With the utilitarianism justification, students believe the result from cheating is a net positive for themselves. Granitz and Loewy suggested identifying the cons of academic dishonesty with the student, such as potential learning loss and a lack of content mastery from completing their assignment dishonestly. Severe penalties should also be clearly communicated and implemented as another detractor.

Students with the rational self-interest justification system are convinced their behavior led to a fair trade for all parties involved. Therefore, teachers should emphasize that the incident did not benefit all parties as the student initially believed. The author of the plagiarized content does not receive exposure as their name has been

removed from their original work, and the student did not receive an equal exchange as copied papers are often easily identifiable, so they won't receive credit for their submission. Since these students might also show less effort due to a perceived belief that the instructor does not work hard in the first place, identifying the instructor's invested labor in the course can also be beneficial.

Machiavellian students take no responsibility in their actions and believe that others are at fault when their academic dishonesty is caught. Much like utilitarian students, enforcement of clear and severe penalties is recommended. These students need to be made aware how the instructor will successfully spot any future behaviors and signing an honor contract is also recommended. Finally, the instructor should review how to honestly complete classwork with the students.

In cultural relativism, the student's own culture has taught them that cheating is normal. Here, the instructor should highlight that academic dishonesty is not accepted in American culture and thus should not be performed. Signing an honor contract and reviewing honest completion techniques also are useful in this situation.

The last justification system pinpointed by Granitz and Loewy was situational ethics, where unique factors outside the course interfered and caused the student to turn to academic dishonesty. Their first recommendation was for the instructor to hold a zero-tolerance policy, that no circumstance will vindicate the student's behavior. Clear, severe penalties should be enforced, too, though Granitz and Loewy also recommended that the teacher should encourage students to share the unique issue



with their teacher such that they can form a compromise rather than having the student resort to an academically dishonest action.

## CHAPTER III: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### Summary of Literature

Educators often measure their students' progress by giving assessments, either periodically through or at the end of a unit. Meanwhile, some students attempt to complete these assessments dishonestly, utilizing a variety of methods to aid in fulfilling their class requirements. It is difficult to pinpoint how frequently students cheat, as studies have found virtually no participation ranging to all students engaging at least once (Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Lucky et al., 2017; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006), though there are concerns it may happen more frequently than instructors realize (Farisi, 2013; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020; Tatum et al., 2018; Tee & Curtis, 2018).

Students cheat in many ways. Such methods include crib notes written on paper or on the body, giving or receiving help from a classmate, studying exams from prior terms, inventing excuses to skip an exam to earn extra time to study, improperly citing sources, and more (Brown, 2002; Carpenter et al., 2002; Farisi, 2013; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Lucky et al., 2019; Tippitt et al., 2009). These dishonest actions can be grouped as accidental or last-minute cheating versus planned cheating, and the planned cheating can be further divided into behaviors arranged before receiving the assignment compared to the intention to cheat after the assignment was given (Farisi, 2013; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006).

There are many reasons why students are academically dishonest. Common reasons involve improving one's grade or to compete with peers, pressure to succeed

from their family or guardians, to live up to their perceived self-image, to hide their lack of knowledge and/or avoid humiliation, because they care more about completing the class than learning the content, and/or not knowing they were cheating (Bayaa Martin Saana et al., 2016; Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Brown, 2002; Brown-Wright et al., 2012; Carpenter et al., 2002; Farisi, 2013; Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020; Kiehl, 2006; Lucky et al., 2019; McCabe & Treviño, 1996; Sileo & Sileo, 2008; Tatum et al., 2018; Tippitt et al., 2009).

Students may justify their dishonest behaviors regardless of whether they were aware they were being dishonest (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Granitz & Loewy, 2006). They might cheat due to the belief the assessment doesn't matter, from dissatisfaction with the instructor and/or the class, that cheating is necessary to succeed in the class, that their performance is more important than the actual learning, the belief their classmates are already cheating, and/or the belief they won't be caught (Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Brown 2002; Brown-Wright et al., 2012; Farisi, 2013; Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020; Liebler, 2015; McCabe & Treviño, 1993; Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013; O'Rourke et al., 2010; Tatum et al., 2018).

Researchers have also identified psychological explanations for cheating. People naturally serve their own desires (Shalvi et al., 2012), thus they will attempt to justify their behaviors. Justification systems include deontology, utilitarianism, rational self-interest, Machiavellianism, cultural relativism, situational ethics, home-school dissonance, amotivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, deterrence theory, rationale choice theory, social bond theory, social strain theory, and differential association

theory (Agnew, 1992; Akbaşlı et al., 2019; Bayaa Martin Saana et al., 2016; Belle & Cantarelli, 2017; Brown, 2002; Brown-Wright et al., 2012; Chiesl, 2007; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Farisi, 2013; Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Guay et al., 2000; Henning et al., 2014; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013; Onwudiwe et al., 2004; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006; Peled et al., 2019; Rebellon et al., 2010; Tippitt et al., 2009; Webster & Harmon, 2002). Identifying a student's reason(s) for cheating can help the teacher form a response to reduce the likelihood the student will be academically dishonest again.

Distance learning has additional challenges, which is problematic as it has become more popular over time since its inception in 1728 (Chakraborty et al., 2020; Kentnor, 2015; US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, n.d., 2020, 2021). Here, students can share private conversations, have more time and access to the Internet, and typically deal with additional class requirements (Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020, Sileo & Sileo, 2008), so they cheat as they want to complete their work as fast as possible (Henning et al., 2014; Magda et al., 2020). They also may want to cheat due to a lack of connection with their teachers and/or peers, and because they feel their professors don't know technology well (Sileo & Sileo, 2008; Granitz & Loewy, 2006).

Instructors and academic institutions may also contribute to academic dishonesty with poor classroom practices. Failing to connect with students, poor class design, appearing to value performance over learning, failing to adequately define and police academic dishonesty, and failing to enforce honor codes are all factors that

encourage students to cheat (Akbaşlı et al., 2019; Bayaa Martin Saana et al., 2016; Burrus et al., 2007; Brown-Wright et al., 2012, Eraslan, 2011; Granitz & Loewy, 2006; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Jaramillo-Morillo et al., 2020, Liebler, 2015; McCabe, 1993; McCabe & Treviño, 1993, 1996; McCabe et al., 2002; Naghdipour & Emeagwali, 2013; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006, Tatum et al., 2018).

However, there are many options for educators to combat academic dishonesty. Common consequences involve awarding no credit or expelling the student, but instructors can be proactive by building positive relationships with students, utilizing effective course design, collaborating with students to form class policies, having effective exam writing and exam room monitoring, clearly defining academic dishonesty, and having effective honor codes (Brown, 2002, Burrus et al., 2007; Carpenter et al., 2002; Chiesl, 2007; Erwin, 2004; Evans et al., 2017; Farisi, 2013; Garavalia et al., 2007; Heckler et al., 2013; Henning et al., 2014; Hollinger & Lanza-Kaduce, 1996; Kolanko et al., 2006; Lucky et al., 2019; McCabe & Treviño, 1996; O'Rourke et al., 2010; Parameswaran & Devi, 2006; Roig & Marks, 2006; Shalvi et al., 2012; Sileo & Sileo, 2008; Sull, 2020; Tanner, 2004; Tatum et al., 2018; Tippitt et al., 2009). Students that are caught cheating are at risk for cheating again (Fida et al., 2018), so teachers should publicly reveal to the class that a student was caught, review the definition of plagiarism and the school's honor code (if applicable) with the class, model appropriate behaviors, and make future assessments more difficult to plagiarize (Farisi, 2013; Granitz & Loewy, 2006; O'Rourke et al., 2010; Tippitt et al., 2009). In some cases, specific consequences may be necessary to address the student's unique reason(s) for

cheating (Granitz & Loewy, 2006). Altogether, effective preventative and reactive strategies can be successful in reducing academic dishonesty in schools.

### **Limitations of the Research**

While completing this thesis, the breadth of the research had to be limited at times. Since exams and grades carry more weight in upper levels of education, the research was restricted to high school and college students and staff. However, the study by Evans et al. (2017) with 3-to-5-year old children peeking at hidden toys was included because the findings regarding the children who delayed their peeking related with why honor codes appear to be effective in universities.

As for holes in the research, most studies listed general preventative suggestions that were perceived to be effective. However, they typically used survey results from students or cited other studies rather than generating experimental data to prove the deterrents' effectiveness. As for consequences, many academic institutions give detentions, suspensions, and/or grades of zero points for cheating, but personal anecdotal experience has shown these consequences typically did not dissuade the culprit from engaging in dishonest behavior again, especially in the same class. Analysis of control groups and experimental groups would have been useful in providing evidence for the efficacy of preventing academic dishonesty. Granted, some authors did acknowledge the difficulty in identifying the frequency of academically dishonest behaviors, which may have been the reason why they did not attempt to experiment with preventative strategies. Therefore, longitudinal studies may have been beneficial,

though there may have been another barricade due to students' potential reluctance to regularly share their frequency of dishonest behavior, even when kept anonymous.

Regarding awarding a grade of zero as punishment, a professor from an undergraduate class at Gustavus Adolphus College stated that a behavioral punishment (detention, suspension, etc.) should be the penalty for cheating rather than an academic sanction such as a zero. She felt the student should be allowed to redo an alternate assessment while receiving a separate punishment to discourage the cheating behavior in the future. None of the research addressed academic versus behavioral consequences for cheating, which would have been informative for this paper.

Lastly, the research was lacking regarding distance learning, likely due to the option not being popular until the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020. While there were suggestions on building relationships with students and how to make exam completion more academically honest, there were no suggestions for alternate assessments such as group projects, partner exams, and/or asynchronous work. Monitoring students online is significantly more difficult than monitoring them in person due to the challenges of seeing their screen and workstation simultaneously, thus assignments that encourage collaboration would remove a barrier for successful exam surveillance for educators.

### **Implications for Future Research**

While general consequences for academic dishonesty already exist, it is possible that guilty students may repeat their behaviors again. Some researchers included action steps for students based on their motivations for cheating, but there were no resources

provided for identifying those rationales. Therefore, a universal questionnaire for guilty students would be useful, where their reasoning is pinpointed so specific consequences can result. This survey could also uncover other justifications that perhaps weren't primary factors in the initial cheating episode but may be used to explain future occurrences. For example, after getting caught, a student might reveal they copied a classmate's work due to having a lack of time to legitimately complete it outside of class, but the survey could show that this student's culture also believes that plagiarism is a minor offense and thus the student is at risk of participating in the behavior again.

Future research should also focus on remote learning. It is likely to remain a common option until COVID-19 is no longer a significant health threat, so making virtual and/or asynchronous education more effective is a must. Collaborative assignments have been part of best teaching practices and it is possible they will become more popular as summative assessments in addition to formative assessments. Studies on partner and group assessments should be completed to determine if they reduce academic dishonesty, as students would be required to cooperate with others to fulfill their class requirements.

### **Professional Application**

Early in my teaching career, I was overwhelmed with completing all duties of my work, which included grading quizzes and tests in a timely fashion. Efficiency was found with scoring the students' work in class while their classmates finished their exams. Thus, I routinely returned graded assessments to students by the next day, which was fueled by the students' compliments that I was the fastest grader amongst all their



teachers. However, this behavior meant I was incapable of performing one of the simplest anti-cheating measures available to teachers in effectively monitoring the classroom. Since starting my research, I have refrained from grading assessments while other assessments are being completed and have devoted my time to regularly walk between students' workstations during testing periods.

In the spring of 2022, I discovered that one of my students had allowed her friend to complete the back of her Pythagorean Theorem quiz in one of my 8<sup>th</sup> grade algebra classes (I must have been helping another student and didn't notice the boy was writing on her quiz). Additionally, that second student had taken a completed quiz from my assignment inbox to aid in answering his quiz. A coworker addressed the second student as she was his case manager for special education services, but I was tasked with handling the first student. While some of my research suggested the student should receive a score of zero for being caught, I remembered a teaching from a professor at Gustavus Adolphus College about refraining from giving an academic punishment for a behavioral incident. She said that students should be allowed a second chance to complete the assessment that was plagiarized, while receiving a detention or suspension to address the cheating episode.

I could tell the front half of my student's quiz did not match any other student's work, so I felt she should only be penalized for the questions on the back that were clearly written in her classmate's handwriting. I scored the front side of the quiz normally and gave this girl a zero for the copied questions on the back. However, she was given the opportunity to redo those questions independently the next day. She

received a new set of questions and had to complete them in another classroom while monitored by a teacher with no other students present. Additionally, her behavior was reported to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade dean of students and her parents were notified as well. I also had a conversation with her about her rationale for cheating. Her responses confirmed my suspicions, as she had not completed any assignments from the current unit. She didn't fully know how to use the Pythagorean Theorem equation, so she turned to her friend for help, especially since he had copied another student's quiz himself. There didn't appear to be any other rationales for cheating, so the only further action taken was that I wanted her to be more proactive in requesting help in class before a summative assessment, which she agreed.

Beyond my individual applications of this research, I would like to see educators use more personalized consequences for students when they are caught cheating. My inspiration for the topic of academic dishonesty was initially sparked by a student of mine from the 2019-2020 school year that I caught cheating four times in my calculus class. Each time, I followed the school's policies for cheating – report to the academic dean, notify the student, award a score of zero for the test – but he persisted. Even a one-on-one conversation about how his behavior would negatively affect him in college and in his career failed to stop the last two occurrences. In addition, another student was open with me about her cheating in her Spanish class (and my calculus class after the school year ended) and when asked, shared that cheating wasn't a big deal in her home country of Azerbaijan. These students showed me that common punishments and threats of punishments from educators and academic institutions were not enough, and

that we must pursue more effectual responses when students are caught cheating. My hope is that my research encourages others to study academic dishonesty in a similar way, looking to prevent future cheating events in novel and/or personalized ways rather than adopting blanket approaches for all students.

### **Conclusion**

While many students want to complete their work honestly, some still will look for alternate ways to earn a sufficient grade without meeting their instructor's expectations morally. It may seem overwhelming to prevent these students from cheating, as they have many tools at their disposal. However, educators that utilize effective deterrent strategies that discourage academic dishonesty can feel more confident that their assessments accurately measure their students' learning, and appropriate reactive consequences tailored to individual students' motivations can help reduce the likelihood of future occurrences as well.

## References

- Agnew, R. (1992). Foundation for a general strain theory of crime and delinquency. *Criminology*, 40(1), 47-87.
- Akbaşı, S., Erçetin, Ş. Ş., & Kubilay, S. (2019). Relationship between prospective teachers' deontic justice attitudes and academic dishonesty tendencies. *South African Journal of Education*, 39(3), 1-12. doi: 10.157000/saje.v39n3a1622
- Bayaa Martin Saana, S.B., Ablordeppey, E., Mensah, N.J., & Karikari, T.K. (2016). Academic dishonesty in higher education: students' perceptions and involvement in an African institution. *BioMed Central Research Notes*, 9(234), 1-13. doi: 10.1186/s13104-016-2044-0
- Belle, N. & Cantarelli, P. (2017). What causes unethical behavior? A meta-analysis to set an agenda for public administration research. *Public Administration Review*, 77(3), 327-339. doi: 10.1111/puar.12714
- Brown, D.L. (2002). Cheating must be okay – everybody does it!. *Nurse Educator*, 27(1), 6-8. doi: 10.1097/00006223-200201000-00010
- Brown-Wright, L., Tyler, K.M., Stevens-Watkins, D., Thomas, D., Mulder, S., Hughes, T., Stevens-Morgan, R., Roan-Belle, C., Gadson, N., & Smith, L. (2012). Investigating the link between home-school dissonance and academic cheating among high school students. *Urban Education*, 48(2), 314-334.
- Burrus, R.T., McGoldrick, K., & Schuhmann, P.W. (2007). Self-reports of student cheating: Does a definition of cheating matter? *The Journal of Economic Education*, 38(1), 3-16. doi: 10.3200/JECE.38.1.3-17

- Carpenter, D.D., Harding, T.S., Montgomery, S.M., Steneck, N., & Dey E. (2002). Student perceptions of institutional and instructor based techniques for dealing with academic dishonesty. *32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Frontiers in Education, 3*, S1H-9-S1H-14. doi: 10.1109/FIE.2002.1158644
- Chakraborty, P., Mittal, P., Gupta, M.S., Yadav, S., & Arora, A. (2021). Opinion of students on online education during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies, 3*(3), 357-365. doi: 10.1002/hbe2.240
- Chiesl, N. (2007). Pragmatic methods to reduce dishonesty in web-based courses. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education, 8*(3), 203-211, 293.
- Deci, E.L. & Ryan, R.M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum Press.
- Deci, E.L. & Ryan, R.M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry, 11*(4), 227-268.
- Drake, C.A. (1941). Why students cheat. *The Journal of Higher Education, 12*(8), 418-420.
- Eraslan, A. (2011). Prospective mathematics teachers and cheating: It is a lie if I say I have never cheated! *Education and Science, 36*(160), 52-64.
- Erwin, J. C. (2004). *The Classroom of choice: Giving students what they need and getting what you want*. ASCD.
- Evans, A.D., O’Connor, A.M., & Lee, K. (2018). Verbalizing a commitment reduces cheating in young children. *Social Development, 27*(1), 87-94. doi: 10.1111/sode.12248
- Farisi, M.I. (2013). Academic dishonesty in distance higher education: Challenges and

models for moral education in the digital era. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education, 14*(4), 176-195.

Fida, R., Tramontano, C., Paciello, M., Ghezzi, V., & Barbaranelli, C. (2018).

Understanding the interplay among regulatory self-efficacy, moral disengagement, and academic cheating behaviour during vocational education:

A three-wave study. *Journal of Business Ethics, 153*, 725-740. doi:

10.1007/s10551-016-3373-6

Garavalia, L., Olson, E., Russell, E., & Christensen, L. (2007). How do students cheat? In E.

Anderman and T. Murdock (Eds.), *Psychology of Academic Cheating*. (pp. 33-58).

Elsevier Academic Press. doi: 10.1016/B978-012372541-7/50004-8

Granitz, N., & Loewy, D. (2007). Applying ethical theories: Interpreting and responding

to student plagiarism. *Journal of Business Ethics, 72*(3), 293-306.

doi:10.1007/s10551-006-9171-9

Guay, F., Vallerand, R.J., & Blanchard, C. (2000). On the assessment of situational

intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: The Situational Motivation Scale (SIMS).

*Motivation and Emotion, 24*, 175-213.

Harper, M.G. (2006). High tech cheating. *Nurse Education Today, 26*(8), 672-679.

Heckler, N.C., Forde, D.R., & Bryan, C.H. (2013). Using writing assignment designs to

mitigate plagiarism. *Teaching Sociology, 41*(1), 94-105.

doi:10.1177/0092055X12461471

Henning, M.A., Ram, S., Malpas, P., Sisley, R., Thompson, A., & Hawken, S.J. (2014).

Reasons for academic honesty and dishonesty with solutions: A study of

pharmacy and medical students in New Zealand. *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 40(10), 702-709. doi: 10.1136/medethics-2013-101420

Hollinger, R.C. & Lanza-Kaduce, L. (1996). Academic dishonesty and the perceived effectiveness of countermeasures: An empirical survey of cheating at a major public university. *NASPA Journal*, 33(4), 292-306.

doi:10.1080/00220973.1996.11072417

Jaramillo-Morillo, D., Ruipérez-Valiente, J., Sarasty, M.F., Ramírez-Gonzalez, G. (2020).

Identifying and characterizing students suspected of academic dishonesty in SPOCs for credit through learning analytics. *International Journal of Education*

*Technology in Higher Education*, 17(45). doi: 10.1186/s41239-020-00221-2

Kentnor, H.E. (2015). Distance education and the evolution of online learning in the United States. *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue*, 17(1 & 2), 21-34.

Kiehl, E.M. (2006). Using an ethical decision-making model to determine consequences for student plagiarism. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 15(6), 199-203.

Kolanko, K.M., Clark, C., Heinrich, K.T., Olive, D., Serembus, J.F., & Sifford, K.S. (2006).

Academic dishonesty, bullying, incivility, and violence: Difficult challenges facing nursing educators. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 27(1), 34-43.

Liebler, R. (2015). Learning that it is okay to cheat. *College Student Journal*, 49(2), 177-180.

Lucky, A., Branham, M., & Atchison, R. (2019). Collection-based education by distance and face to face: Learning outcomes and academic dishonesty. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 28, 414-428. doi: 10.1007/s10956-019-9770-8

- Magda, A.J., Capranos, D., & Aslanian, C.B. (2020). *Online college students 2020: Comprehensive data on demands and preferences*. Wiley Education Services.
- McCabe, D.L. (1993). Faculty responses to academic dishonesty: The influence of student honor codes. *Research in Higher Education, 34*(5), 647-658.  
doi: 10.1007/BF00991924
- McCabe, D.L. & Treviño, L.K. (1993). Academic dishonesty: Honor codes and other contextual influences. *Journal of Higher Education, 64*(5), 522-538.  
doi: 10.1080/00221546.1993.11778446
- McCabe, D.L. & Treviño, L.K. (1996). What we know about cheating in college: Longitudinal trends and recent developments. *Change, 28*(1), 28-33.
- McCabe, D.L., Treviño, L.K., & Butterfield, K.D. (2002). Honor codes and other contextual influences on academic integrity: A replication and extension to modified honor code settings. *Research in Higher Education, 43*, 357–378.  
doi: 10.1023/A:1014893102151
- Naghdi-pour, B. & Emeagwali, O.L. (2013). Students' justifications for academic dishonesty: Call for action. *Social and Behavioral Sciences, 83*, 261-265.
- Olt, M.R. (2002). Ethics and distance education: Strategies for minimizing academic dishonesty in online assessment. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration, 5*(3).
- Onwudiwe, I.D., Odo, J., & Onyeozili, E.C. (2004). Deterrence Theory. In M. Bosworth (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Prisons & Correctional Facilities* (pp. 234-237). Sage Publications. doi: 10.4135/9781412952514.n91



- O'Rourke, J., Barnes, J., Deaton, A., Fulks, K., Ryan, K., & Rettinger, D.A. (2010). Imitation is the sincerest form of cheating: The influence of direct knowledge and attitudes on academic dishonesty. *Ethics & Behavior, 20*(1), 47-64.  
doi: 10.1080/10508420903482616
- Parameswaran, A. & Devi, P. (2006). Student plagiarism and faculty responsibility in undergraduate engineering labs. *Higher Education Research & Development, 25*(3), 263-276. doi: 10.1080/07294360600793036
- Peled, Y., Eshet, Y., Barczyk, C., & Grinautski, K. (2019). Predictors of academic dishonest among undergraduate students in online and face-to-face courses. *Computers & Education, 131*, 49-59. doi: 10.1016/j.compedu.2018.05.012
- Rebellon, C.J., Piquero, N.L., Piquero, A.R., & Tibbetts, S.G. (2010). Anticipated shaming and criminal offending. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 38*, 988-997.
- Roig, M. & Marks, A. (2006). Attitudes towards cheating and before and after the implementation of a modified honor code: A case study. *Ethics and Behavior, 16*(2), 163-171. doi: 10.1207/s15327019eb1602\_6
- Shalvi, S., Eldar, O., & Bereby-Meyer, Y. (2012). Honesty requires time (and lack of justifications). *Psychological Science, 23*(10), 1264-1270. doi: 10.1177/0956797612443835
- Sileo, F.J. & Kopala, M. (1993). An A-B-C-D-E worksheet for promoting beneficence when considering ethical issues. *Counseling & Values, 37*(2), 89. doi: 10.1002/j.2161-007X.1993.tb00800.x
- Sileo, J.M. & Sileo, T.W. (2008). Academic dishonesty and online classes: A rural

- education perspective. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 27(1-2), 55-60.
- Sull, E.C. (2020). Online teaching and the COVID-19 virus: An essential guide!. *Distance Learning*, 17(2), 71-74.
- Tanner, C.A. (2004). Moral decline or pragmatic decision making? Cheating and plagiarism in perspective. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 43(7), 291-292.
- Tatum, H.E., Schwartz, B.M., Hageman, M.C., & Koretke, S.L. (2018). College students' perception of and responses to academic dishonesty: An investigation of type of honor code, institution size, and student-faculty ratio. *Ethics & Behavior*, 28(4), 302-315. doi: 10.1080/10508422.2017.1331132
- Tee, S. & Curtis, K. (2018). Academic misconduct – Helping students retain their moral compass. *Nurse Education Today*, 61, 153-154.
- Tippitt, M.P., Ard, N., Kline, J.R., Tilghman, J., Chamberlain, B., & Meagher, P.G. (2009). Creating environments that foster academic integrity. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 30(4), 239-244.
- US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Student enrollment: What is the percent of students enrolled in distance education courses in postsecondary institutions in the fall?*. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds-/TrendGenerator/app/answer/2/42>
- US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2021). *Number and percentage of students enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by distance learning participation, location of student, level of*

*enrollment, and control and level of institution: Fall 2018 and fall 2019* [Table 311.15]. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20\\_311.15.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_311.15.asp)

US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). *Back to school statistics*. [https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372#PK12\\_distancelearning](https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372#PK12_distancelearning)

Vallerand, R.J., Pelletier, L.G., Blais, M.R., Briere, N.M., Senecal, C., & Vallieres, E.F.

(1993). On the assessment of intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation in education: Evidence on the concurrent and construct validity of the Academic Motivation Scale. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 53, 159-172.

doi: 10.1177/0013164493053001018

Webster, R.L. & Harmon, H. (2002). Comparing levels of Machiavellianism of today's college students with college students of the 1960s. *Teaching Business Ethics*, 6(4), 435-445.