Academic Integrity Task Force Subcommittee Recommendations

Faculty Education Subcommittee
Members: Jessica White, Stephanie Gutzler, Kathryn McCarthy, Matthew Hayat, Jill Anderson, Rich Fendler

The following recommendations have been arranged in order of priority from highest to lowest. This order was determined after considering a.) what measures may have the biggest effect and b.) which can be quickly and easily implemented. Where appropriate, we have made notes on which items require further support and guidance on development from university-level administration.

1.) Training on what to do in situations of academic dishonesty
What should you do if you know a student is cheating? What if you only suspect cheating in a testing situation? We each had different answers to these questions. We propose training for faculty on these matters. This may be disseminated by Department or College/School, potentially for discussion in a faculty meeting and/or presentation by a member of this Task Force.

We recommend that training address questions inclusive of the following:
- What specific actions should faculty take in cases of academic dishonesty? Training should provide examples across instructional modalities.
- On whom, exactly, is the burden of proof? Is it the faculty member’s responsibility to have iron-clad evidence or to report suspicion to a departmental administrator for further investigation?
- What language should a faculty member use in confronting a student about suspected academic dishonesty and intent to file a charge?
- What kind of evidence is required to move forward with a charge of academic dishonesty?
- What happens when a student appeals?
- With respect to communication with colleagues about matters of academic dishonesty: What are faculty allowed to discuss with each other? For example, are we permitted to discuss strategies students are using to cheat?
- What information should be protected in discussion with our colleagues (i.e. student identity, specific class)?

Rationale: Members of this subcommittee discussed the lack of training in general (even back to our TA days!) on what actions to take in these situations. We recognize the value of seeking advice and guidance from colleagues, but are also cognizant of protecting student privacy. We feel having a plan would empower and protect faculty which will give them confidence in how to manage specific instances of AD.

2.) Acknowledging effects on mindset
We acknowledge that dealing with student dishonesty can be draining for faculty. It is an act of betrayal. The student has violated, not only specific policies, but also a contract of trust between instructor and student and among their peers. We propose providing a space in which faculty can discuss these occurrences with each other. This might take the form of a monthly coffee hour (virtual, for now) to discuss what has happened and help process it with other faculty.

Rationale: Providing an opportunity for faculty to talk to each other and express their disappointment, for example, will help faculty mindset. Our subgroup discussed how a student’s cheating can impact how we feel about the other students in the class or about that student moving forward. It would be
healthy (therapeutic, even) for us to have space for faculty across the University to discuss and relate to one another as well as to workshop productive steps forward in terms of well-being as well as future course structure or student/instructor interactions.

3.) Repository of faculty resources
   a.) We propose developing **specific and standardized language** for faculty to use in their syllabi. Our subgroup is willing to design template language from which faculty can select and customize with respect to specifics and based on the needs of their classes.
      **Rationale:** Many faculty simply state they will charge students in instances of academic dishonesty based on the policy set forth in the Student Code of Conduct, but the Code of Conduct does not have specifics as to how to apply penalties. This can become problematic in cases of appeal.
      **Requested Guidance:** Within our discussion, we acknowledged a great diversity among the wording faculty currently use in their course policy statements. This is a recommendation that we feel would require a **significant investment of time** to review variations on syllabus language and we would **request counsel from Legal and other University administrators**.

   b.) We propose development of **resources that can be utilized by faculty** in their classes for student education (therefore, there is likely overlap on this item with the Student Education Subgroup).
      Specifically, we recommend the creation of videos on academic dishonesty that educate students on the **types of violations**. These videos should be aligned with policies and definitions as set forth by the University. For example, students need information on specifically what plagiarism is and to be instructed on how to avoid plagiarism. For each type of violation – plagiarism, multiple submission, unauthorized collaboration, etc – we recommend iCollege modules **inclusive of quizzes** (i.e. akin to cybersecurity or biohazard training). We also recommend the inclusion of information on the **consequences of being charged** with academic dishonesty.
      **Rationale:** Resources such as these will serve to standardize across the university how faculty define types of academic dishonesty, but more importantly, educate students on the types of AD and the consequences of it. These resources could also be incorporated into new-faculty orientation and used for ongoing education for faculty as well.

   c.) We discussed providing education for students via **specific interventions by faculty after a student has been charged with academic dishonesty**.
      In most cases, a faculty member charges a student with academic dishonesty, the student may refute the charge to the faculty member but not appeal. In some cases, the student does appeal. In either case, the faculty-student relationship has likely taken on a new, and likely tense or strange, dynamic. We recommend **coaching faculty** on how to navigate repairing the relationship with the student. This may vary in approach, especially given the variation in class sizes, from **what kind of e-mail language to use following the resolution of the AD charge to how to initiate that first virtual or face-to-face conversation post-charge** (and, potentially, post-appeal).
      **Rationale:** This would give faculty the opportunity to more holistically approach the education of the student that has violated the AD policy. It provides the student the opportunity for growth and recovery from this dishonest action and restores their confidence that they can continue their education even after making a mistake with respect to integrity.

4.) Simplifying reporting procedures
   We propose the development of **training for faculty on how to report** cheating as well as to implement strategies for it to make it easier for faculty to report.
   Specifically, it would be helpful to have the following:
- Videos on iCollege available for faculty viewing and reference when a case of AD arises
- A template for reporting; faculty can fill in the student information and then select the charges to apply from a drop-down menu. A text box could be available for a description of the situation and a section available to upload relevant evidence and documentation (i.e. syllabus).
- Departments and Colleges/Schools should communicate specifics to their faculty regarding the flow of reporting.

**Rationale:** Many faculty do not report instances of cheating because of the sheer amount of time it requires. This is often in cases where the offense is not particularly egregious and the student is given a warning. Unfortunately, failure to report sends a message of complacency to the student (and potentially, their classmates).

5.) **Standardizing penalties and defining levels of dishonesty**

a.) We propose **standardizing penalties based on the type of charge.** This may mean defining sub-levels of penalties based on the violation (i.e. plagiarizing a 30-page paper vs. plagiarizing a paragraph while including a citation). It would be helpful to give faculty recommendations and guidance, therefore, on when and what type of penalties to impose based on the charge. Faculty also need clarity on whether they **must** charge a student if they apply an academic penalty.

b.) We extend this proposal to include **educating faculty on procedural penalties** – what they are, when they are appropriate to use, and how to address such penalties in a syllabus.

**Rationale for both:** For many of us, we are unclear on how the penalties of AD are determined and applied outside of our classes. Our perception of what might happen to a student that is charged with AD varied significantly even among our 6 subgroup members. Many faculty do not report because they fear students will be expelled for charges that may seem minor in comparison to other types of violations.

**Student Education Subcommittee**

Members: Carol Cohen, Zachary Saylor, Susan Richmond, Karen Williams Jones, Ryan Rowberry, Anne Murphy, Michael Sanseviro

**Suggestions Geared Toward Early Intervention:**

**Augment Academic Integrity component at orientation**
- Michael Sanseviro is currently working on this via GSU 1010
- Members of the SCSD would be willing to fill role of guest lecturers
- Need a metric to ensure we are reaching ALL incoming students
- Need to identify comparable course for all GSU campuses

**Mini-Refresher Courses**
- Similar to cyber security and other online short courses currently required of all GSU faculty/staff.
- Make this a requirement for class registration each semester, 90% correct requirement.
- Several examples on the web from other schools, including UCSD, U Del, LaTrobe, Rochester.

**Chat Box/Panther Answers**
- Would allow students to get anonymous answers regarding academic integrity. No information currently comes up if one posts question “what happens if I am caught cheating” in Panther Answers
Pop Up Ads/Vignettes/Videos
- Have pop up announcements with different vignettes focused on academic integrity. These would be strategically placed and appear when students log onto iCollege or other frequently visited GSU websites.
- Sample topics:
  o Increasing awareness of consequences: ‘95% of students who cheat while taking an online exam get caught’. Or – ‘did you know that if you are caught cheating – you could be expelled from GSU?’
    ▪ Most students that come before the SCSD are completely unaware of the severity of the penalty.
  o Encouraging student:faculty communication: ‘Are you feeling stressed out about finals? Have you considered reaching out to your instructor?’ Goal here is to emphasize the positive things that can come of meeting with the professor.
    ▪ Most students that come before the SCSD admit that they did not feel comfortable discussing barriers/impediments to their academic success with their instructors.
- Adapt CETLO videos on student success in an online environment to include segment on ‘tempted to cheat?’

Academic Integrity Website
Provide a centralized location for all information pertaining to academic integrity, including honor code, tips on succeeding in an online environment, etc. Include an anonymous site for students to report violations of academic honesty.
Model after UGA’s website - https://honesty.uga.edu/

Academic Integrity Events
- This includes different events to hype AI. Possibly be a weeklong event – each day featuring a specific topic.
- Ideally would take place within the first few weeks of classes.
- ‘Take the Pledge’ campaign
- Academic Integrity Ambassadors
- Hold raffles, give out prizes

Suggestions Geared Toward Thwarting Second Offense:

Short Course/Workshop
- After first offense – students would be required to participate in a workshop. Successful completion of workshop would be dependent on proficiency in an assessment.

Second Offense Consequences
Update content on Notice of Academic Honesty to include and emphasize potential disciplinary consequences if charged a second time. Most AH offenders do not read the notice and are unaware of the consequences should they have a repeat offense. Could also include a requirement that first offenders meet with their advisor or an academic integrity specialist housed within the Dean of Students office.

Additional Items:

Honor Code Update
- Have students provide input on updating content of the honor code. Could be conducted in the form of a survey, or via student government. “What does it mean to live with academic integrity?”
- Honor Code should be featured prominently on new student orientation materials and have specific hyperlink on proposed webpage.
- Have new student applicants sign Honor Code when applying for admission.

**Alternative Assessment Subcommittee**
Members: Julian Allen, Laura Carruth, Ben McGimsey, Jan Ivery, Lee Webster, Tarrah Mirus

**Recommendations:**
1. Develop Alternate Testing Strategies (Priority 1)
   a. Develop communication plan to engage deans and department chairs to build awareness and drive change locally (5-10 hours for Communication Development)
      i. Build awareness / Educate our faculty on importance.
      ii. Faculty Driven approaches
      iii. Custom for each department/discipline
   b. CETLOE Develop a series of training videos: (40-80 Hours, mostly CETLOE team)
      i. Driving assessment design
         1. How to customize your approach
      ii. Samples of 5+ specific strategies, using existing faculty voices (representing multiple colleges)
         1. Large Course
         2. Small/Medium Course
         3. Quantitative Materials
         4. Qualitative Materials
         5. Etc.
      iii. Balance the workload for faculty & students
   c. Provide faculty training on evaluating and selecting assessment tools for use in their courses (both live, and recorded) (10-20 hours preparation for Training)
2. Faculty Actions for Integrity Statements: (Priority 1)
   a. Faculty adopt or include integrity statements at the top of all assessments/assignments
   b. CETLOE can add integrity statements to the iCollege Assignment Tool that faculty can adopt and include on assignments built into iCollege.
      i. Template of integrity statement: <Pull from Faculty Senate, see below>
3. Testing Tools: (Priority 2) (20 hours to develop evaluation plan, identify team)
   a. Create formal testing tool evaluation and planning process
   b. Institute a one-per-college faculty assessment team to analyze current and potential future tools for testing, including

**Points of information**
- Differentiate solutions based on:
  - Short Term (Covid Response) vs. Long Term (Georgia State Online Offerings)
  - Degree level (Associate / Bachelors / Masters / PhD)