Module One: Definitions

Have you heard about Academic Integrity? If you haven’t you’re about to If you have, what do you remember?

Regardless of your level of familiarity, it is a very important at Duquesne University.

The University has a policy and committee dedicated to Academic Integrity.

You can read the whole policy here (show link), but right now, we’re going to focus on some important definitions.

The Duquesne University Academic Integrity Policy defines Academic Integrity as “the pursuit of knowledge and understanding in an honest and forthright manner”.

What does that really mean, though?

Well, we can think about how this policy applies to your work by considering the two main violations of the policy -- plagiarism and cheating. You are probably familiar with the obvious ways that plagiarism and cheating occur on campus.

Borrowing someone’s homework? Copy and pasting text from an article without citing? Turning an individual assignment into group work? Asking for answers on a test?

All of these are violations of the academic integrity.

But there’s more. Along with the definition of academic integrity, Duquesne’s policy defines cheating as using unauthorized material or assistance on any type of exam or project, including the use of notes, electronic devices and any other unapproved materials. With respect to group projects, labs and other contexts, cheating includes deception with the intent to influence grades or outcomes.

On screen: Cheating on quizzes, tests, examinations, or projects may include giving, receiving, or using unauthorized assistance or material. (Unauthorized material may include, but is not limited to, notes or other written documents as well as wireless communication or computing devices, calculators, formulas, computers, computer programs, software, data, or text.) In other contexts (e.g., group projects, labs), cheating may include forms of deception intended to affect grades or other outcomes. Cheating may also include, but is not limited to, student use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in fulfilling assignments such as writing papers, preparing reports, developing course projects, or solving problems. Cheating may also include student possession without permission of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the University faculty or staff.
In addition to cheating, there is the issue of plagiarism, which applies to written, electronic and oral work. Plagiarism is the use in any form (copying, summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting) of the work or specific ideas of another person without specific acknowledgement, including proper citation and quotation marks, where appropriate. Plagiarism also includes submitting written work purchased from another person or entity and submitting work previously submitted for credit in another course.

On screen: Plagiarism in papers or other written, electronic, or oral work (including essays, research papers, theses, dissertations, presentations, class projects, or work for publication) may include, but is not limited to, the use—whether by summary, paraphrase, copying, direct quotation, or a combination of such methods—of the published or unpublished work or the specific ideas of another person or source without full, clear, and specific acknowledgment (including the use of quotation marks or other conventions to indicate the source’s language). Plagiarism may include the submission of material from sources accessed through the Internet or by other means, or from other individuals, without proper attribution. Also, plagiarism may include the submission of a paper prepared in whole or in part by another person or persons or an agency or entity engaged in providing or selling term papers or other academic materials. Plagiarism may also include the submission, without the instructor’s approval, of work submitted for credit in another course.

So what do all of these definitions really boil down to?

You’re cheating if you use materials not explicitly provided or approved by your instructor with permission to use them on an exam or a controlled assignment. You’re cheating if you ask for answers or ask for help when it’s not allowed. You’re definitely cheating if you steal the questions to a test or if you purposefully lie about the outcome of an experiment or other type of project.

What about plagiarizing? If you use someone else’s writing or ideas within your own work without giving them proper credit, you’re plagiarizing. This applies even if you paraphrase or summarize what someone else said. You can even plagiarize yourself by submitting work to one class that you’ve already submitted for another course. And obviously, you’re plagiarizing if you use a paper or project you bought off the internet.

Now you know the definitions. But why should you care about any of this? Think of it this way. Who are you really cheating when you cheat or plagiarize? If you violate academic integrity intentionally, maybe you think you’re gaming the system. However, aside from disrespecting your professors and classmates, you’re really cheating yourself -- out of learning, out of the money you pay for your courses, and out of opportunities to improve yourself.

When you complete the rest of the module, you’ll learn more about academic integrity, including how to identify and avoid the pitfalls of cheating and plagiarism. When you’re done, you’ll be an academic integrity expert.

Now, let’s try a quick quiz to see what you’ve learned.