

Tips for Dealing with Student Academic Misconduct

While we would like to think that all of our students steer away from academic misconduct and know all of the university policies regarding this important issue, we occasionally encounter the students who don't. By being pro-active and setting aside some time to discuss your expectations, students are more likely to be honest. Implementing some of the ideas below is a great start!

Foster a Productive Classroom Environment

- Clearly state course goals and expectations at the beginning of the semester and include them in your syllabus.
- Define what academic misconduct means and include the definition in your syllabus. Explain what is meant by cheating, fabrication, interference, plagiarism, and violation of course rules.
- Reinforce reasons why original thought and doing one's own work is valued in an academic setting.
- Inform students of the consequences of academic misconduct and procedures you will follow along with their rights if they are accused of academic misconduct.

Establish Ground Rules

- Inform students in writing of the testing and grading system for the course.
- Clearly state the level of collaboration that is allowed for each assignment.
- Let students assist you in establishing rules for the class.

Make Connections with Students to Lessen Likelihood of Academic Misconduct

- Decrease anonymity by learning students' names, meeting with them individually, and using minute papers or journal entries to learn more about them.
- If students aren't doing well in the course, talk to them and provide them with strategies to help them improve.
- Seek feedback from students. Find out how the class is going. Administer an informal course evaluation early in the semester or schedule a student focus group (SGID)

General Procedures for Responding to Student Academic Misconduct

- Consult the *Indiana University Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct* for information on policies and procedures.
- Arrange to meet the student in a more private setting. During the meeting, talk in a professional and courteous manner. Advise the student of the alleged act of misconduct and the information upon which the allegation is based. Ask the student for his or her comments regarding the allegation.
- Indicate to the student any disciplinary action to be taken.
- Inform the student of his or her right to appeal the decision and provide information on the appeals process.
- Document the incident by submitting a written report to the appropriate academic offices.

References

- Hernandez, T., & Fister, D. (2001). Dealing with disruptive and emotional college students: A systems model. *Journal of College Counseling*, 4(1), 49-62.
- Indiana University (2005). *Indiana University Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct*. Retrieved March 13, 2006 from <http://dsa.indiana.edu/Code/Code%20of%20Student%20Rights,%20Responsibilities,%20and%20Conduct%202005.pdf>
- McKeachie, W. J. (2006). *McKeachie's teaching tips: Strategies, research, and theory for college and university teachers*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Sorcinelli, M. D. (1994). Dealing with troublesome behaviors in the classroom. In K. W. Prichard & R. M. Sawyer (Eds.) *Handbook of College Teaching: Theory and Applications*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing.