2009 ADEA Section on Dental Hygiene: Academic Integrity

Presented by
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Robert Merton, sociologist
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

- Pursuit of knowledge, understanding, and truth in an **honest** manner
- **Honest** academic conduct
- Grades reflect only that student’s achievement
- All activities necessary for continuing intellectual and professional growth
Why do we care about academic integrity?

- Moral environment
- Educators shape values
- Reputation of school and health profession
- Faculty responsibility
- Assessment outcomes
- Dishonest student
- Public
- Goals of higher education
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

- Intentional participation in deceptive practices
- Broad umbrella term
  - Cheating
  - Plagiarism
  - Fabrication
  - Aiding-abetting academic dishonesty
  - Falsification of official documents
- Obtaining unfair advantage
HONOR CODES

- Protect institution
- Protect rights of student
- Provide equal opportunity
- Define expected behaviors
- Disciplinary policy
- Due Process
HONOR CODES

- Serious test cheating:
  - 1/3 to 1/2 lower on honor code campuses
- Serious cheating on written assignments:
  - 1/4 to 1/3 lower on honor code campuses

“While an honor code may have a significant impact on peer culture, it is the peer culture itself that appears to be the most significant factor in influencing the level of academic dishonesty.” Dr. Donald McCabe
The Prevalence of Academic Dishonesty in Texas Dental Hygiene Programs
1st RESEARCH STUDY on ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

William Bower’s Landmark Study

- 1964
- 600 deans; 500 Class presidents
- Nationwide representative sample
- 99 colleges: 5000 undergraduates
- 50% admit to cheating
- Magnitude of problem: 
  - grossly underestimated
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PREVALENCE</th>
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<td>HIGH SCHOOL</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<td>1999</td>
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<td>Andrews</td>
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<td>75%</td>
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<td>Leventis (SIU)</td>
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<td>Rudavsky (IU)</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sherman (UMDNJ)*</td>
<td>2007*</td>
<td>8 students</td>
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<td>Howard (UNLV)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>10 students</td>
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<td>Press (UMDNJ)*</td>
<td>2006*</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Beemsterboer</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>37 of 46 schools</td>
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<td>Fuller</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>43%</td>
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DEMOGRAPHICS

- Younger students
- Fraternity/sorority members
- Athletics or extracurricular activities
- Living on campus
- Males over females
- Low GPA
- Peer Behavior
- Level of seriousness
- Cheated in the past
CHARACTERISTICS  80%

- Cynical or apathetic attitude
  - Everyone does it
  - Need to cheat to get ahead
  - Successful people use whatever means necessary to win
  - Cheating is not serious
  - Normal outcome of competitive environments

- Peer behavior
  - Perception of peer approval
  - Climate of social acceptance
MATERIALS and METHODS
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Prevalence of cheating
- Age effects on cheating
- Impact of ethics course, honor code school, teacher discussed cheating
- Peer reporting
- Justifications for cheating
- Deterrents to cheating
- Other forms of cheating
Sampling Strategy

- 20 of 21 Dental Hygiene Programs
- 400 matriculating students

Procedures

- Pilot test
- Surveys mailed to each school
- Confirmation letter with instructions
  - 15 minutes of class time
  - No faculty or staff present
  - Class president distribute
  - Student place completed or non-completed survey in attached envelope
  - Email and thank you letter
DATA ANALYSIS

- SPSS
  - Frequencies; chi-square; Fisher’s Exact; cross-tabulations
  - Significance level $\alpha \leq 0.05$
  - Information data - nominal
  - Age & cheating behaviors - ordinal
- Open-ended questions reviewed
  - Common themes emerged
DATA

- 293 returned; 4 unusable
- 73.25% response rate
- Surveys = 289
- Question 20 = 1 response
- Question 21 rank ordered = 116
- Question 22 = 25 responses
- Question 23 = 48 responses
PREVALENCE

Overall:

86.5%

n=250
No statistical significance for cheating behaviors and
- If student had an ethics course
- If the school had an honor code
- If a faculty member discussed cheating
PEER REPORTING = responsibility of peers to report cheating incidents

observed cheating:
62%  n=178

reported the incident:
10%  n=17
JUSTIFICATIONS FOR CHEATING
n=116

🌟 Academic Success Pressures
- 😱 Overloaded with demands at school
  - n=84  30% of total sample
- 😱 Pass course/clinic requirement
  - n=63  22% of total sample
- 😱 Did not know the material
  - n=51  18% of total sample

E:\ADEA2009\RankOrderJustifications.docx
JUSTIFICATIONS FOR CHEATING
n=116

🌳 Attitudes or Situational Factors

🌳 To save time
   - n=85  29% of total sample

🌳 Did not feel it was serious cheating
   - n=55  19% of total sample

🌳 Easy opportunity
   - n=50  17% of total sample

E:\ADEA2009\RankOrderJustifications.docx
OTHER JUSTIFICATIONS

- Help classmate pass course
  - n=26
- To raise GPA
  - n=29
- Know peers who cheat
  - n=39
- Faculty ignores cheating
  - n=4
"I have all my late homework excuses archived."
List other reasons why you engaged in academic dishonesty

List anything you feel could decrease the likelihood of cheating
SUMMARY of RESULTS

- DH students’ cheating behaviors consistent with the literature
- Large majority cheated one time
- 1:10 peer reported
- Higher incidents under age 30
- Unauthorized collaboration frequent & common
- 26% studied unauthorized previous exams
- 20% cheated on quiz or exam
- 45% falsely recorded vital signs
- 24% copied previous perio charting
- 53% violated infection control
Summary cont.

- **Academic success pressures:**
  - #1—overloaded by demands at school
  - #2—pass course or clinic requirement

- **Attitudinal or Situational factors:**
  - #1—to save time

- **Student thoughts on deterrents:**
  - Less pressure to succeed!
  - Less overload!
  - Enforcement of Disciplinary Policy!
  - Use of technology for exams!
LIMITATIONS

- Sensitive subject
- Response bias or under-reporting
- Non-participating students
- Procedures not executed as instructed
- Impossible to know:
  - Number of schools with honor code
  - Number of schools with ethics course
  - How often faculty members discuss cheating
- Results limited to Texas DH programs
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Determine ethical competency
- Incorporate applied professional ethics module didactic and clinical
- Ensure *acceptance/understanding* of honor code & revisit honor code
- Calibrate department
- Enforce due process policy
- Decrease students’ stress levels
- Apply preventive measures
- Promote academic integrity/ **Modeling**
- Keep students fascination/attention
Cheating stops here.
FURTHER RESEARCH

- Student/Faculty differences
  - What constitutes academic dishonesty
  - Level of seriousness for different types

- Generation Y
  - attitudes, values, belief systems
  - moral development or moral confusion
  - How faculty can foster academic integrity

- Peer influence
  - how/why major role in decision to cheat
  - Peer reporting

- Attitudes on sanctions-different offenses
  - Cultural diversity affects on teaching

- Ethics
  - Decrease if incorporated each semester
“Character’ is doing what is right when no one is looking.”
Mrs. Tesar

Link PublishedJDEarticle.pdf
QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU

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