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<https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-common-is-academic-dishonesty-college-students-university-cheating-professors-testing-answers-grades-resume-11666118948>

OPINION FUTURE VIEW

How Common Is Academic Dishonesty?

Students discuss cheating in college and the effect of remote classes.

36 pm ET



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Editor's note: In this Future View, students discuss cheating. Next week we'll ask, "This summer, to much congratulation from environmentalists, California enacted rules that would ban the sale of new gasoline-powered cars by 2035. Are electric cars actually the future? Should they be?" Students should click here to submit opinions of fewer than 250 words before Oct. 25. The best responses will be published that night. Click here to submit a video to our Future View Snapchat show.

Blame the Pandemic

Cheating has always been around, but it is now easier and more accessible with the use of technology and online learning. Chegg, a publicly traded technology company that hosts answers to questions and problems in popular textbooks, skyrocketed in value during the pandemic. There is nothing stopping students from looking up answers on a second computer or on their phones when taking online tests.

The lines have also been blurred between collaboration and cheating. For example, study groups have always been a great way to work and study together with peers. But now, instead of meeting at the library like most students did before the pandemic, students can collaborate on group chats and email each other the material.

There are ways to mitigate this. Professors can tailor their assessments to emphasize reasoning over memorization. Schools can restrict access to popular cheating resources such as UnemployedProfessors (a website where students can pay someone to do their coursework). Most important, mandating a return to in-person instruction would decrease the overall use of technology, preventing cheating.

—*Rafael Arbex-Murut, University of California, Berkeley, information and data science*

Do We Even Realize It?

Cheating in college is so commonplace that students often do it without realizing. Last year I sent a picture of an in-class assignment to a peer who personally asked for help, but I received a failing grade after the professor noticed that my work had been replicated. I was shocked to learn that my actions, regardless of my innocent intention, meant I was just as guilty as the person who did the cheating.

Making homework publicly available for comparison via technology is a daily occurrence among college students, especially after a year of online school owing to Covid. Most students share work to be helpful, but because we live in a digital age, we should understand that what constitutes cheating goes beyond peering over someone's shoulder during a test.

We should be teaching young children in the elementary education system the importance of protecting their work, being more cautious of what goes on the internet, how to cite sources properly, and to give credit when it's due. Technology offers students helpful academic resources, but it also allows for more-advanced cheating methods, and recognizing this reality when students are young might help decrease cheating in college. My own incident was an invaluable life lesson. It's a shame I had to learn it 15 years into my educational career.

—*Kate Robinson, Chapman University, strategic and corporate communication*

We're Desperate to Win

The dialogue around cheating is deeply flawed. People are more concerned with the integrity of an event or test instead of looking at why more and more people are cheating. But cheating

has more to do with the meaning of “winning” in today’s society. “Winning” is not just something to brag about; it’s something to put on a résumé.

There is such a drive nowadays to be the absolute best, not out of ambition but out of necessity. We have seen this trend on the rise for years. Grades are no longer enough; you have to have extracurriculars and experience. But even that is not enough. You have to win to be seen. I blame the system in place that makes students so desperate to win that they cheat.

—*Lauren Schenk, Macalester College, sociology*

Long-Form Exams Are the Key

A well-written evaluation is the solution to cheating. An essay, for example, will elicit different responses from people with different levels of understanding that can be readily distinguished. Dishonesty is also recognizable: Remarkably similar answers stand out.

Professors running computerized multiple-choice tests make grading easier for themselves but cheating easier for students, too. This practice is both lazy and unhelpful, especially when the questions are reused from year to year. Students are better served by answering long-form questions that ask them to reflect rather than confuse. These questions don’t allow luck, mimicry or dishonesty to be easily distinguished from true understanding.

—*Dan Glikstein, University of Ottawa, civil law*

Let’s Go Back to School

Cheating has become a bigger problem now than ever before. With the switch from in-person classes to online, students have found ways to cut corners and put less effort into their work by using websites such as Quizlet or Chegg to find answers online. I have seen countless students cheat on their homework or even tests.

The best fix is to switch back to pen-and-pencil tests in person. Students will always find a way to cheat on their online exams. But cheating is harder when students are required to sit in front of a professor and take a test in the classroom. Being in person may not prevent cheating altogether, but it would significantly reduce its frequency.

—*Caden Slifko, Quinnipiac University, marketing*

[Click here](#) to submit a response to next week’s Future View.