

# Academic Honesty

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## Background

Whenever I catch a student cheating — either by copying a paper from someone else, by downloading something from the Internet, or by looking at a neighbor's test answers — I feel sad and betrayed. I feel sad because the student is violating the first principle of scholarship, which is to be honest. In the world of science, the consequences of dishonesty can be fatal, for example, in the falsifying of drug testing results. In the world of the humanities, the consequences can be just as fatal; for example, when we ignore those with whom we disagree, or when we do not include the arguments or data against our positions. I feel betrayed because I automatically trust that everyone will be honest, and when someone isn't, it is a rude shock.

## Official Policy

But personal feelings aside, the consequences of academic dishonesty are severe indeed. On pp. 478–479 of the 2012–2013 SDSU Catalog the penalties for cheating are listed under “Student Discipline and Grievances.” Here is what it says:

Following procedures consonant with due process established pursuant to Section 41304, any student of a campus may be expelled, suspended, placed on probation or given a lesser sanction for one or more of the following causes which must be campus related.

## Cheating

Cheating is defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by the use of dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to

- a) copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other examination;
- b) discussing answers or ideas relating to the answers on a test or other examination without the permission of the instructor;
- c) obtaining copies of a test, an examination, or other course material without the permission of the instructor;
- d) using notes, cheat sheets, or other devices considered inappropriate under the prescribed testing condition;
- e) collaborating with another or others in work to be presented without the permission of the instructor
- f) falsifying records, laboratory work, or other course data;
- g) submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of the course;
- h) altering or interfering with the grading procedures;
- i) plagiarizing, as defined; and

j) knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined as the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the university as one's own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate sources. Plagiarism shall include but not be limited to

- a) submitting work, either in part or in whole, completed by another;
- b) omitting footnotes for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that belong to another;
- c) omitting quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, sentence, or part thereof;
- d) close and lengthy paraphrasing of the writings of another;
- e) submitting another person's artistic works, such as musical compositions, photographs, paintings, drawings, or sculptures; and
- f) submitting as one's own work papers purchased from research companies

### **Consequences of Getting Caught**

The consequences of cheating or plagiarizing are listed in the SDSU catalog. Let me state at the outset that, at a bare minimum, if you are caught cheating in my classes, you will not be allowed to re-do or make-up that work. You will receive a zero for the assignment. I will report you to the Center for Students Rights and Responsibilities if I feel that this was not an innocent mistake. The consequences may be even more severe depending on the nature of the infraction. In other words, you may risk probation, suspension, or even expulsion if, after due process, it is determined that you are guilty of cheating or plagiarizing.

**In other words, it is not worth the risk!** It is better to turn in an assignment late, than to turn in a product that is not your own. It is better to make an honest C, an honest D, than to steal an A from your classmates, from the University, and from me.

**For more information, please visit the home page of the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities: <http://studentaffairs.sdsu.edu/srr/index.html>**