

Changing Cheaters: Promoting Integrity and Preventing Academic Dishonesty

A Resource for Teachers, Parents, Coaches
and Others Who Work With Youth



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Table of Contents

Note and Preface	3
Defining the Problem	
Introductory Statement	4
Defining Academic Dishonesty	5
What Is Academic Dishonesty? (handout).....	6
Strategies to Promote Integrity	
Basic Strategy to Promote Integrity and Teach Trustworthiness: TEAM	7
Trustworthiness Through Discussion: Guidelines	9
Trustworthiness Through Discussion: Questions (handout).....	10
Stories Promoting Integrity	11
Quotations About Integrity	13
Implementing an Honor Code	14
Honor Pledge and Affirmation	15
Notice to Parents Regarding Academic Integrity (handout).....	16
Acknowledgment of Honor Code (handout).....	17
Practical Tips for Parents (handout).....	18
Sportsmanship and Academic Integrity	19
Strategies to Stop Cheating	
Institutional Strategies to Deter Academic Dishonesty	20
Assuring Fairness and Integrity of an Examination	21
Preventing, Detecting, and Dealing With Plagiarism	24
Reducing Pressures That Encourage Cheating	26
Rebuttals to Common Rationalizations for Cheating	27
Special Circumstances Posed by Group Work	31
Appendices	
Appendix A: Sample Honor Code	32
Appendix B: Norfolk Collegiate School's Honor Code	37
Appendix C: Honor Pledge FAQ	39
Appendix D: Bibliography/Other Useful Resources	41
Appendix E: Glossary	43

Note

On Thursday, April 29, 2004, ABC aired a special edition of *Primetime* that focused on the alarmingly cynical attitudes and widespread cheating in high schools and colleges. The comments from the young people interviewed, and the survey data the program presented, paint a dismal picture of the present moral environment and of the future if current attitudes about honesty and fair play do not improve before this generation enters the workforce as corporate executives, politicians, paramedics and nuclear inspectors. Michael Josephson, president of the Josephson Institute of Ethics and founder of the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition, participated in shaping the program and he appeared during the program calling for schools and parents to more aggressively and consistently promote integrity and prevent cheating. His words struck a chord with educators and parents, hundreds of whom sent him e-mails asking about solutions. They wanted guidance on how to make a difference in the classroom and at home. This booklet is our response to those requests.

Preface

Once we began the project of putting together a definitive resource on how to promote academic integrity and prevent cheating, we realized we could not produce in a short time a fully comprehensive and definitive discussion on the endless subtleties and options of promoting integrity and preventing cheating. Still, the need is great and we were committed to providing a significant resource as quickly as possible.

We view this project to be a continuing work in progress, and we plan to revisit the issue of academic dishonesty not only in future editions of this booklet but also in other CHARACTER COUNTS! trainings and materials.

This resource has two related goals: to promote integrity and to stop cheating. The latter is considerably easier to accomplish, as it lends itself to more structural and procedural solutions, which can be implemented immediately by individual teachers in individual classrooms. The broader goal, promoting integrity, is best achieved by a long-term and concerted school-wide effort to create a climate of integrity in which cheating becomes unthinkable. Ideally, entire schools would implement the practices recommended in these pages, and all the schools' teachers and administrators would uniformly enforce the consequences of cheating. Of course, we understand that coordinating a new campaign and building consensus on policies takes time. The task can seem overwhelming, but we urge you to persist. As Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Lastly, a disclaimer. We are aware that the explicit discussion of cheating methods has the potential to educate would-be transgressors. However, we believe it is impossible for teachers and parents to stop something they are only partially aware of, and impossible for students to self-regulate something that no one will clarify for them in unequivocal language. So we have risked giving away a few cheating tips in the hopes that you and your children will be better equipped to battle and resist the forces of dishonesty.

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Introductory Statement

Cheating has reached alarming proportions in all segments of American society, creating widespread cynicism and an erosion of trust. The root of the problem can be found in our schools, where academic dishonesty is rampant. Students openly admit to cheating and plagiarism, and openly justify their actions.

According to a 2002 survey of more than 12,000 high school students by the Josephson Institute of Ethics, 74 percent admitted cheating at least once within the past 12 months (48 percent said they cheated at least twice). Things are getting worse; in 1992, 61 percent admitted cheating. When it comes to lying and stealing, the statistics are no more encouraging: 37 percent said they would be willing to lie to get a good job; 46 percent said they sometimes lie to save money and 43 percent agreed with the statement that “a person has to lie or cheat sometimes in order to succeed.” Thirty-eight percent said they stole something from a store within the past year (19 percent did so two or more times) and 28 percent said they stole from a parent or other relative. These statistics illustrate the larger problem: a general lack of honesty and integrity.

We are in deep trouble if young people maintain these habits as the next generation of nuclear inspectors and airline mechanics, corporate executives and cops, journalists and generals, legislators and lawyers, and politicians and parents. It is, therefore, a matter of import and urgency that those who have the opportunity to shape the values and attitudes of young people engage in thoughtful, systematic and comprehensive efforts to promote integrity and prevent cheating.

Cheating, though serious in itself, is just one symptom of a lack of integrity. Thus, efforts to combat cheating should be undertaken in the context of a broader positive emphasis on the virtues of honesty and honor.

The purpose of this resource is twofold:

1. To assist parents, teachers, coaches and others who regularly interact with youngsters in promoting more consistently and effectively an understanding of, love for and commitment to personal integrity; and
2. To provide specific strategies and techniques to reduce the willingness and ability to cheat or plagiarize.

Defining Academic Dishonesty

Students and parents often hide behind real and feigned confusion about cheating. Therefore, it is critical that you be explicit when explaining what constitutes cheating and what is and is not acceptable. Lay everything out in clear, simple terms so there is no defense of ambiguity or ignorance.

A word of caution: technological advances and student creativity produce new forms of cheating not explicitly covered by any list. Thus, you must provide (perhaps in the form of a handout) a general statement about cheating. Include examples, but explain that your list is not exclusive. Make it clear that students are expected to interpret and apply the overall concepts of academic honesty in good faith.

Finally, there are those who worry that enumerating the ways of cheating will give students new ideas on how to cheat. This is a legitimate concern, but the risk is outweighed by the importance of laying out expectations as lucidly as possible.

Following is an extensive list of various forms of academic dishonesty, which you can distribute to students and parents.

What Is Academic Dishonesty?

As you know, we value academic integrity very highly and do not permit any forms of dishonesty or deception that unfairly, improperly or illegally enhance a grade on an individual assignment or a course grade. The following is a list of behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty. We are aware, however, that new forms of cheating, plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty may arise and therefore, we expect every student to interpret the requirement of academic honesty and integrity broadly and in good faith. If you have any doubt as to whether a particular act constitutes academic dishonesty, ask a teacher before you do it!

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

Cheating on Exams

1. Copying from others.
2. Having or using notes, formulas or other information in a programmable calculator or other electronic device without explicit teacher review and permission.
3. Having or using a communication device such as a cell phone, pager, PDA or electronic translator to send or obtain unauthorized information.
4. Taking an exam for another student, or permitting someone else to take a test for you.
5. Asking another to give you improper assistance, including offering money or other benefits.
6. Asking for or accepting money or any other benefit in return for giving another improper assistance.
7. Providing or receiving information about all or part of an exam, including answers (e.g., telling someone in a subsequent period what was on your exam, or being told this information).
8. Having or using a "cheat sheet" (a piece of paper with answers, formulas, information, or notes of any kind) that is not specifically authorized by the teacher.
9. Altering a graded exam and resubmitting it for a better grade.
10. Working together on a take-home exam, unless specifically authorized by the teacher.
11. Gaining or providing unauthorized access to examination materials.

Note: Simply having possession during an exam of any prohibited or unauthorized information or device, whether or not it is actually used, is an act of academic dishonesty and will be dealt with as such.

Sources:

1. *Goldy-Beacom College Academic Honor Code*, <http://goldey.gbc.edu/advisement/honorcode.html>
2. *University of Pennsylvania Code of Academic Integrity*, <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>
3. *Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity*, <http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html>

Plagiarism in Papers and Assignments

1. Giving or getting improper assistance on an assignment meant to be individual work. (When in doubt, ask.)
2. Including in any assignment turned in for credit any materials not based on your own research and writing. This includes:
 - a. Using the services of a commercial term paper company.
 - b. Using the services of another student.
 - c. Copying part or all of another person's paper and submitting it as your own for an assignment.
3. Acting as a provider of paper(s) for a student or students.
4. Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without consulting both teachers (self-plagiarism).
5. Failing to use quotation marks where appropriate.
6. Failing to properly acknowledge paraphrased materials via textual attribution, footnotes, endnotes and/or a bibliography.
7. Making up data for an experiment ("fudging data").
8. Citing nonexistent sources (articles, books, etc.).

Other

1. Misrepresenting your academic accomplishments, such as by tampering with computer records.
2. Deceiving a teacher or making up a false reason or excuse to get special consideration on an exam or an extension for an exam or paper.
3. Failing to promptly stop work on an exam when the time allocated has elapsed.
4. Forging a signature.
5. Hoarding or damaging library materials.

Note: Attempted academic dishonesty, even if unsuccessful, will be treated as academic dishonesty.

Basic Strategy to Promote Integrity and Teach Trustworthiness: T.E.A.M.

It is up to each individual to make a commitment to integrity, but much can be done to create an ethical “culture” at home and school. An ethical culture is a climate that promotes honest and honorable conduct and discourages dishonest, deceitful and dishonorable behavior. In an ethical culture it’s easier and more rewarding to do the right thing than the wrong thing, and everyone is expected to be concerned with discerning and doing the ethically right thing.

The Josephson Institute of Ethics, directly and through its CHARACTER COUNTS! program, works with all sorts of institutions to help them build or strengthen a sustainable ethical culture. The primary strategy is to instill core values through a process embodied in the acronym T.E.A.M. – **T**each, **E**nforce, **A**dvocate and **M**odel.

The process is effective in inculcating the six core values promoted by CHARACTER COUNTS! (the "Six Pillars of Character": trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship). Here we will concentrate on the values of trustworthiness and fairness, the values most directly involved in cheating.

*People of character do the right thing
because it is right
even when it costs more than they want to pay
and even when others may gain advantage
by their dishonorable conduct.*

TEACH

- **Define.** Be sure your child or student really understands the basic terms (see Appendix E for basic definitions).
- **Discuss.** Young people often do not think about the implications of their actions and often hide behind shallow reasoning and rationalizations to justify cheating, plagiarism or other forms of dishonesty. It is important, therefore, to guide them through a rigorous analysis of the nature and impact of dishonesty. Every parent, teacher and coach ought to look for opportunities to initiate a serious discussion about this. (See pages 9-10 for discussion guidelines and questions, and pages 27-30 for rebuttals to common rationalizations.)

ENFORCE

- **Rules of Conduct.** Establish clear and simple rules of conduct specifying expectations concerning integrity and consequences for cheating or other forms of dishonesty. Parents: though expectations are often more informal in a home setting, your child might benefit from the emphasis provided by a written document on the importance of integrity.
- **Acknowledgment.** Use some sort of formal acknowledgment of the expectations, such as:
 - **Signed Acknowledgment.** Require each youngster to sign the code or statement: “I have read and understand the rules regarding integrity and realize that serious consequences will result if I violate these rules.”
 - **Oral Acknowledgment.** Require each student separately (not together in a group) to affirm that he or she “understands the rules regarding integrity and that serious consequences will result if I violate these rules.”

- **Pledge:** Though the Josephson Institute does not recommend coercing youngsters to make a personal pledge (pledges have no moral force unless they are voluntary), some anti-cheating strategies involve written and/or oral promises stating that the student will not give or receive improper assistance.

The difference between a pledge and an acknowledgment:

Taking a pledge means you promise to follow the rules. Signing an acknowledgment simply means you understand the rules and the consequences for breaking them.

- **Praise and Discipline.** Honest behavior — including efforts to discourage classmates from cheating, and in some cases, reporting cheating — should be praised. Likewise, serious disciplinary sanctions (sufficient to demonstrate the importance of the rules and to discourage those who might break them) must be consistently imposed.

ADVOCATE

- **Endorse and Encourage.** Look for opportunities in your interactions to endorse and encourage integrity by clearly and unequivocally stating your admiration and respect for people who are honest, and your firm expectation that your children/students are good enough and strong enough to resist temptations to cheat or otherwise sacrifice their integrity.
- **Inspire.** Seek to inspire youngsters to value their personal integrity, credibility and reputation by telling stories and repeating or posting quotations. (See pages 11-13 for sample stories and quotations you might use.)

MODEL

- **Review.** Seeking input from your children or students, consider systematically whether there are areas that you or the school should work on to do a better job of modeling integrity, discouraging and preventing cheating and of enforcing your rules against cheating. If there are areas where you think you could be better, commit to improve.
- **Honesty.** Be certain you are scrupulously honest in your dealings.

Trustworthiness Through Discussion: Guidelines

In initiating a discussion about integrity, cheating and plagiarism, seek to establish an atmosphere that promotes an open and honest exchange of ideas that encourages youngsters to talk freely about their attitudes and experiences.

- **Encourage Openness.** While you should express your own views strongly supporting integrity and disapproving of cheating and other forms of dishonesty at appropriate times, be careful not to do so too soon or too strongly in a way that represses discussion.
- **Clarify Terms.** At appropriate times, provide definitions or clarify terms to be certain everyone is talking about the same thing.
- **Group vs. One-on-One Discussions.**
 - **Group.** If you are a teacher or coach, a group discussion of at least 30 minutes can be very valuable. In this situation you can use the discussion questions outlined below in a somewhat formal way.
 - **One-on-One.** Personal one-on-one discussions can often be even more powerful. Parents, teachers and coaches should look for an appropriate opportunity when there is sufficient time and privacy to explore the issues and offer meaningful and caring counseling. In these informal situations you must be more creative and flexible in guiding the discussion. Still the discussion questions outlined below can and should stimulate deep reflection that leads to insight.
- **Prepare.** Before your discussion, take a few minutes to read our responses to the most common excuses and rationalizations used to justify cheating. (See pages 27-30.)

Trustworthiness Through Discussion: Questions

1. What do you think about cheating in the real world? (Let them talk. Encourage candor. Seek to bring out true opinions.)
 - a) How common is cheating in society?
 - b) Who cheats?
 - c) If cheating is widespread, does that justify individuals cheating to compete or in self-defense?
 - d) What do you think about the sorts of cheating you hear about in business, politics and other settings?
2. What do you think about cheating in school?
 - a) How prevalent is cheating in school?
 - b) Who cheats?
 - c) What are the different ways kids cheat at school?
3. Do cheaters sometimes prosper?
 - a) If it works, is that an adequate justification to cheat?
 - b) Is cheating wrong in itself or only if you get caught?
4. Does cheating affect trust?
 - a) If so, in what ways?
 - b) Should cheating affect trust in the person who cheats?
 - c) Does cheating affect trust in the value or importance of grades?
5. Every choice produces both intended and unintended consequences. What do you think are the good and bad consequences of cheating in a school setting ...
 - a) On the cheater's academic record?
 - b) On the cheater's reputation among different groups, if the cheating is known?
 - c) On the cheater's character?
 - d) On the cheater's personal relationships?
 - e) On others in the class?
 - f) On the teacher in the class?
 - g) On others who go to the school?
6. What do you think the appropriate consequence of cheating should be if:
 - a) Someone falsifies accounting figures in business?
 - b) Someone gets a job after lying on a résumé?
 - c) A journalist fabricates portions of a story?
 - d) A coach violates recruiting rules to acquire an athlete?
 - e) An Olympic athlete uses illegal performance-enhancing drugs?
 - f) A high school principal falsifies records to understate dropout or violence rates?
 - g) A teacher changes answers on statewide exams to make the school look better?
 - h) A student at your school plagiarizes a paper?
 - i) A student at your school cheats on an exam?
7. **Parents:** Ask your son or daughter what consequence he or she thinks is appropriate in the home setting (separate and apart from consequences at school).
8. **Teachers and Coaches:** At the end of the discussion consider assigning a committee of students to summarize the discussion and prepare a declaration of definitions and expectations concerning cheating.
9. Go up to each student personally and say something like: "Do you understand this school's (or classroom's) policy on cheating?" After the student says yes look the student directly in the eye and ask, "Do you personally pledge to me that you will not cheat?" "Will you shake my hand to seal that pledge?" Parents may want to develop a variation of this personal pledge.

Stories Promoting Integrity

1. **Steinmetz High School.** In 1995, English teacher Jerry Plecki was assigned as the coach/advisor of the Academic Decathlon team at Steinmetz High School in Chicago. A rival school had won the event for nine years running and was arrogant about their winning streak. Mr. Plecki and his student team were fed up with losing and being thought of as second-rate.

One of the students was able to acquire a stolen copy of the test that was to be used in the Illinois Academic Decathlon. Mr. Plecki helped his students use the test to cram for the competition. With advance knowledge of the questions, the Steinmetz team blew away other teams, but their score was so high (9,400 points more than they had scored in the regional playoff), that others became suspicious. The runner-up school asked for an investigation and the scandal was exposed.

Plecki was forced to leave teaching in humiliation, and he and his students became the object of national criticism and disdain. The high school was greatly embarrassed and the shame of that event colors people's view of the school to this day. Still, Mr. Plecki and some of the students continued to justify their behavior. In 2000, when an HBO movie called "Cheaters" portrayed the cheating scandal, Mr. Plecki said "there are no moral absolutes on this given topic," and some of the discredited students justified their actions on national media. Mr. Plecki, who blamed the "media" for turning the lives of his school kids upside down, said by way of justification that though his students were very "bright," they had no chance to win the competition honestly.

The incident and its impact can promote a lively discussion.

2. **1936 Olympics and Luz Long.** In 1936, Jesse Owens, a famous African-American runner and long jumper, was to compete for America in the Olympics held in Berlin, Germany. Hitler was on the rise and the atmosphere surrounding the event was filled with swastikas and Nazi rhetoric about the Aryan master race.

Though Owens held the world record in the long jump, he foot-faulted on his first two qualifying jumps. If he fouled again, he'd be eliminated. Luz Long, the premier long jumper from Germany introduced himself and suggested that Owens play it safe by making a mark several inches before the take-off board. It worked and Owens advanced to the finals to compete against Long. Ultimately, Owens set an Olympic record and won the gold medal, barely beating Long. Long was disappointed but he wanted to compete against the best in the world and was proud to have done so. Though he knew it would displease Hitler, Long embraced Owens and walked around the stadium filled with nearly 100,000 astonished Germans.

Owens never saw Long again (he was killed in battle during World War II). Though a story that Owens later participated in the wedding of Long's daughter is a myth, Owens never forgot his interaction with Long. Describing his feelings, he later said, "You can melt down all the medals and cups I have and they wouldn't be a plating on the 24-karat friendship I felt for Luz Long at that moment."

Today, sports is so consumed with getting an edge, so dominated by the desire to win rather than a passion to compete, that Luz Long's gesture of common decency and sportsmanship seems naïve. Ask your students what they think.

3. **1964 Olympics and Eugenio Monti.** In the 1964 Winter Olympic Games at Innsbruck, the Italian Eugenio Monti and his teammates were among the favorites in the four-man bobsled event. Surprisingly, a Canadian team broke the Olympic record in the first heat and had a half-second lead on the rest of the field. Unfortunately, on their record-breaking run, the Canadian sled was damaged. If it couldn't be fixed for the final run, they would be disqualified. As much as Monti's team wanted to win, they wanted to win against their best competitors rather than see them disqualified. So the Italian mechanics helped the Canadians fix their sled just a few minutes before the next heat. Canada ended up winning the gold medal and Monti's team had to settle for the bronze. But there is more.

Monti was also to compete in the two-man bobsled event. After the first heat, Tony Nash of Great Britain was in the lead. A bolt attaching the runners to the shell had sheared making it impossible for Nash to

continue. Monti, who was about to do his run, instructed his mechanics to take the critical axle bolt from his sled as soon as the run was over and bring it up to Nash so he could fix his sled. With this help, the team from Great Britain won first place and again Monti was left with the bronze medal. He also won the "Pierre de Coubertin" award for fair play.

When Monti was criticized in the Italian press for giving up the gold he replied simply, "Nash didn't win because I gave him the bolt," he said. "He won because he had the fastest run." John Naber, president of the U.S. Olympians and a man with four gold medals in swimming, said, "A true sportsman who understands the Olympic ideal wants to win against his best opponent on his opponent's best day."

Eugenio Monti won the gold medal at the 1968 Winter Olympics in *both* the two-man and four-man bobsled events. But it was his willingness to lose that earned him a prominent place in Olympic history. His act represents sportsmanship at its best: the pursuit of victory with zeal and passion, recognizing that there is no true victory without honor.

4. **The Passing Record: Nate Haasis.** On October 25, 2003, 17-year-old Nate Haasis, the star quarterback for the Southeast High School Spartans in Springfield, Illinois, completed a 37-yard pass that helped him reach a major milestone. That pass gave him the conference passing record for most yards in a high school career. What he didn't know is that it had all been rigged with the best of intentions by his coach and the coach for the team that was winning by 16 points in the last minute of the game. Since the result of the game was not in doubt, the coaches agreed, without Nate's knowledge, that Nate's team would let the other team score on the next play so that after the kick-off Nate would have the ball and the ability to set the record.

Nate noticed that the other team's defenders weren't paying any attention, and he called a pass play and set the record. Later, he said, "I was more upset we lost than anything. I really didn't think about the record or what happened at the end of the game until I got home, and then all weekend I started thinking about it and felt a little awkward about what happened."

Rumors about a "deal" began to spread and the local newspaper accused the coaches of cheating. When the reality of what happened set in, Haasis wrote a letter to the director of the Central State Eight Conference saying: "In respect to my teammates, and past and present football players of the Central State Eight, it is my hope that this pass is omitted from any conference records. ... I would like to preserve the integrity and sportsmanship of a great conference for future athletes."

Haasis' mother was quoted as saying, "I was proud that the record wasn't that important to him, that he's a kid that goes into every game with the intention of playing his best and winning the game." His father, added, "It's gratifying to know that he's a typical teenage kid, that does things we don't agree with all the time, and to try to teach him certain values, and it's good to know that some of that has sunk in." Haasis was featured on national media for his honesty and the story is likely to give him a form of immortality.

Compare this to the situation in 1998 when Nykesha Sales at the University of Connecticut was one point shy of a record in the 1998 season. Although she was injured, the other team let her score without opposition and she accepted the record. And in 2002, when Michael Strahan of the New York Giants broke the National Football League record for "most sacks in a season" for tackling Green Bay's quarterback Brett Favre, many people were convinced that Favre let him have the tackle to set the record.

The Nate Haasis story is adapted from http://abcnews.go.com/sections/WNT/PersonofWeek/pow031107_haasis-1.html

Quotations About Integrity

For more quotations, visit www.charactercounts.org.

1. O what a tangled web we weave, When first we practise to deceive!
-- Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)
2. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, but knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.
-- Samuel Johnson (1709-1784)
3. A reputation for good judgment, for fair dealing, for truth, and for rectitude, is itself a fortune.
-- Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887), U.S. cleric and abolitionist. Proverbs from Plymouth Pulpit
4. A man who will steal for me will steal from me.
-- Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), U.S. president, on firing a cowboy who had applied Roosevelt's brand to a steer belonging to a neighboring ranch.
5. He who does not bellow the truth when he knows the truth makes himself the accomplice of liars and forgers.
-- Charles Pierre Péguy (1873-1914), French writer and poet, from "Provincial Letter"
6. Honesty is the best policy; but he who is governed by that maxim is not an honest man.
-- Richard Whately (1787-1863), British theologian and logician
7. One must always tell what one sees. Above all, which is more difficult, one must always see what one sees.
-- Charles Pierre Péguy (1873-1914), French writer and poet
8. Virtue is its own reward.
-- Matthew Prior (1664-1721), English diplomat and poet
9. One must live the way one thinks or end up thinking the way one has lived.
-- Paul Bourget (1852-1935), French novelist, from *Le Démon de Midi*
10. It is impossible to calculate the moral mischief that mental lying has produced in society. When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime.
-- Thomas Paine (1737-1809), Anglo-American political theorist, from *The Age of Reason*
11. It goes against all my principles. I love the game too much, respect it too much. I couldn't do it to you. I couldn't do it to the memory of my father, and I couldn't do it to myself. If I have to go into bankruptcy, something I'd hate to do, I'd do it.
-- Mendy Rudolph, NBA referee, (as recounted by his wife) as to why he refused to accept an offer of a Las Vegas gambler to cancel Rudolph's gambling debts by shaving points in a game (1992).
12. The challenge for all people of ambition is to recognize that the pursuit of success creates constant temptations to sacrifice integrity and that there is a point at which the price of success makes its fulfillment worthless.
-- Michael S. Josephson
13. There is no pillow so soft as a clear conscience.
-- French proverb
14. Live truth instead of professing it.
-- Elbert Hubbard
15. In my day, we didn't have self-esteem, we had self-respect, and no more of it than we had earned.
-- Jane Haddam
16. It is better to be hated for what you are than to be loved for something you are not.
-- Andre Gide
17. The greatest way to live with honor in this world is to be what we pretend to be.
-- Socrates
18. No man for any considerable period can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true.
-- Nathaniel Hawthorne, in *The Scarlet Letter*
19. Never "for the sake of peace and quiet" deny your convictions.
-- Dag Hammarskjöld
20. Integrity is not a conditional word. It doesn't blow in the wind or change with the weather. It is your inner image of yourself, and if you look in there and see a man who won't cheat, then you know he never will.
-- John D. MacDonald

Implementing an Honor Code

An Honor Code (also known as a Code of Academic Integrity) is intended to be a school-wide system for enforcing rules and consequences regarding cheating and plagiarism. However, individual teachers can adopt a Code if the school does not have one in place. Many colleges and universities have Codes that can serve as models for your school's Code. We have provided a sample Honor Code in this booklet (see Appendix A) but encourage schools to develop their own, with student input. For more examples, Duke University links to the Honor Codes of almost 100 institutions of higher learning at http://www.academicintegrity.org/samp_honor_codes.asp.

Steps to Implementing an Honor Code

1. Formulate the Code

- a. Adopt the code provided in Appendix A
- b. Write your own code
 - i. Form a faculty committee
 - ii. Form a mixed committee of faculty, parents and students

2. Disseminate the Code

- a. Distribute copies on posters to teachers for classroom display
- b. Post copies of the Code in common areas such as the main office, library, lunch room, etc.
- c. Provide copies for students to keep in their binders
- d. Involve parents
 - i. Send home a copy of the Code with an acknowledgment form to be signed and returned
 - ii. Send home handouts from this resource, including What Is Academic Dishonesty?, the Notice to Parents, Practical Tips for Parents and Discussion Questions.
- e. Promote integrity as a major school-wide initiative
 - i. Celebrate CHARACTER COUNTS! Week, the third week of October each year.
 - ii. Recognize students who demonstrate integrity.

3. Uphold the Code

- a. Hold students accountable for living up to the expectations outlined in the Code
 - i. Require students to sign an acknowledgment that they understand the rules and sanctions
 - ii. Encourage the signing of a pledge and affirmations
- b. Hold teachers accountable for enforcing the consequences outlined in the Code
 - i. Ensure that enforcement is consistent.
 - ii. Establish a special panel that reviews and sanctions incidents of academic dishonesty.

Honor Pledge and Affirmation

One element of a larger Code should be the voluntary **Honor Pledge**. This calls for students to promise they will not commit any acts of academic dishonesty. The Pledge states:

I pledge on my honor that I will not give or receive any unauthorized assistance on any assignment/examination.

Public ceremony is effective in creating a cultural momentum toward integrity. Students could sign a large poster or banner with the Pledge printed on it to be displayed for all to see. The signing should be a noteworthy ritual (consider having it follow a rally or assembly). The banner should remain posted in a high-traffic common area (cafeteria, main hallway, etc.) until graduation, at which point it can be displayed at the ceremony. Such a banner can be easily made out of butcher paper. Also, schools can obtain durable, personalized vinyl banners from the CHARACTER COUNTS! national office. For more information, visit <http://www.charactercounts.org>.

Similar to a Pledge is an **Affirmation**. An Affirmation is written out and signed by students after completing an assignment or exam, as confirmation that they did not cheat on that particular exercise. The Affirmation states:

I affirm on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.

Such an action promotes reflection about academic integrity, and encourages a personal commitment to integrity.

The Pledge and Affirmation must not be mandatory. If students are forced to sign them when they really don't intend to uphold the principles, the act becomes meaningless for everyone. (You can, however, require that students and/or parents sign an *acknowledgment* indicating they understand the rules of the Honor Code and the consequences for breaking them.) Having an optional Pledge and Affirmation is still a worthwhile cause, however, because most students will willingly sign it and hopefully that will have a positive influence on others. See Appendix B for answers to frequently asked questions regarding Honor Pledges.

Notice to Parents Regarding Academic Integrity

Dear Parent,

We know you share both our commitment to promoting personal integrity and our concern over reports that cheating has reached epidemic proportions in American schools. For example, a 2002 survey of more than 12,000 high school students by the Josephson Institute of Ethics revealed that 74 percent admitted cheating at least once in the previous year; 48 percent said they cheated two or more times in the past 12 months.

We are dedicated to assuring that our students do not demean their character, damage their credibility or jeopardize their futures by engaging in any form of academic dishonesty. To accomplish this goal, we need your support and active involvement in reinforcing the importance of academic integrity.

To that end, we are making the promotion of integrity and the prevention of cheating and plagiarism a major objective. We have included with this notice a copy of our Honor Code and some other information that may help you strengthen your son or daughter's understanding of and commitment to these standards and the ethical values we all seek to uphold.

Disciplinary actions in response to cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty are serious, so please carefully read the policies and discuss any concerns you have with administrators or teachers. Then please sign the attached acknowledgment and send that page back with your son or daughter in the next five days. You may keep the handouts for future reference.

Sincerely,

Acknowledgment of Honor Code

I have read the Notice to Parents and the accompanying Honor Code, including policies regarding examinations and papers submitted. I have discussed these matters with my child and agree to support the school in enforcing these policies.

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Name (printed)

Student Name (printed)

Practical Tips for Parents: **How to Instill Academic Integrity in Your Son or Daughter**

- Talk to your children about what it means to have integrity. See Discussion Questions.
- Emphasize (and demonstrate!) that you value integrity over grades.
- Reward honest effort even if it does not produce “A” work.
- Make sure your children understand that you do not expect perfection.
- Mark a calendar with the dates of your children’s exams, and make sure that they start studying several nights before each test.
- Do not do your children’s homework for them; provide guidance, not answers, if asked.
- Monitor your children’s time on the computer; block common term paper supply websites using the parental controls available through your Internet service provider or software designed for this purpose.
- Check your children’s assignments before they turn them in.
- If your child is caught cheating, take immediate disciplinary action; also, find out why they cheated, and take steps to remedy the situation.

The Link Between Sportsmanship and Academic Integrity

(Tips for Coaches)

The Josephson Institute's 2002 survey of more than 12,000 high school students revealed that student-athletes cheat at a higher rate than non-athlete students. Explanations for this vary from pressure to maintain eligibility for athletic programs, to sports taking up too much studying time. Coaches are in the unique position to influence this sub-group of cheaters, both on and off the playing field.

The Pursuing Victory With Honor campaign's *Game Plan for Amateur Basketball* is a CHARACTER COUNTS! publication designed to help amateur (i.e., school) coaches integrate character education into sports programs. (See <http://www.charactercounts.org/sports/gameplan-basketball.pdf>) The following, derived from the *Game Plan*, are some ideas for coaches on how they can play a role in enhancing the academic integrity of student-athletes.

- ❖ Do not allow athletic demands (i.e., practice, tournament and game schedules) to prevent student-athletes from reaching their full academic potential.
- ❖ Provide comprehensive academic support to student-athletes to compensate for the time demands and competitive pressures of playing a sport.
 - Tutoring
 - Class scheduling preferences
 - Assistance in developing:
 - Time-management skills
 - studying skills
 - test-taking skills
- ❖ In spite of any assistance provided, continuously emphasize personal responsibility for academic performance.
- ❖ Safeguard against cheating and plagiarism by monitoring the assistance given to student-athletes; it must not encourage, permit, or condone violations of academic integrity.
- ❖ Be attentive to grades and exam schedules to provide encouragement and support.
- ❖ Differentiate between academic potential (obtaining an education good for a lifetime) and eligibility (maintaining the privilege to play sports).
- ❖ Reiterate that good character displayed on the field should overlap into life off the field
 - Set clear expectations that student-athletes will conduct themselves with integrity at all times or suffer consequences both on and off the field.
 - Be willing to follow through with threatened consequences (e.g., bench a player who cheats on an exam).
 - Draw connections between dishonesty in the classroom and playing the sport
 - If a student-athlete cheats on a test, who's to say s/he won't cheat in a game?
 - A student-athlete risks not only his or her own reputation but also the team's.
- ❖ Emphasize the importance of having alternative career goals and the knowledge and honestly obtained academic credentials to pursue them.

Institutional Strategies to Deter Academic Dishonesty

In addition to making concerted and persistent efforts to promote integrity and create an internal aversion to cheating, those who administer tests must adopt sensible procedures to make it very difficult to cheat. These “mechanical” methods of deterring academic dishonesty do not themselves build character or instill trustworthiness, but they do protect the honest students and prevent dishonest ones from getting grades they don’t deserve.

As a side note, teachers should consider methods other than traditional closed-book exams to test students. In any event, tests and assignments should be drafted to assess students’ ability to apply their knowledge, not merely demonstrate memorization. Consider open-book essay tests or oral exams, which make it impossible to cheat.

Assuring Fairness and Integrity of an Examination

Before a test:

- 1) **Access to Information.** Provide full and equal information to all students about what the test will cover, how it will be graded and the weight of the grade on the exam in relation to the final course grade. Be sure not to give unfair advantage to any student by disclosing details not made available to all students.
- 2) **Access to Old Exams.** If former tests that can be useful as a study tool are available to anyone (e.g., from a school club that collects them or from former students who kept them), make the old exams available to everyone so that all students compete on a level playing field. Consider storing a bank of old tests in the school library, or keep them in your classroom, and make them available at lunch or break time for any students who want to see them.
- 3) **Access to New Exam.** Keep the exam secure by locking it up in a drawer or cabinet. Do not leave copies of the exam lying around on your desk, on a table in front of the room, or sitting in your office mailbox. Also, do not forget the master in the photocopier. Do not leave your computer unattended while composing the exam. If the exam is to be saved on your hard drive, make sure your computer is password protected.
- 4) **Modify Former Questions.** If you intend to re-use any objective questions that you have used before, change the wording slightly and change the order of the options to foil any cheater who might try to memorize answers without understanding the question.
- 5) **Alternate Versions.** If your test includes objective questions, make at least two versions of the test, putting the questions in a different order. Distribute tests so that students sitting next to each other will have different forms of the test.
- 6) **Alternative or Combined Exams.** If you have two or more classes that will be tested at different times you must not give the same test in, say, second period as you give in fifth period. Some students will tip-off others about what is on the exam, creating an unfair advantage. Either find a way of combining the test in a single period, or prepare different tests for each class.
- 7) **Exam Booklets.** If you will require students to write in exam booklets, have each student turn in an empty one the day prior to the exam. Redistribute the books randomly on the day of the exam. This prevents students from writing notes in their booklet.
- 8) **Counsel Students.** Periodically, as well as immediately before the exam, explicitly discuss the rules demanding academic integrity and the seriousness of the consequences for students caught violating these rules. In addition, seek to inspire personal commitment by stating high expectations and confidence that students will not betray their teacher's trust, seek unfair advantage over their classmates, dishonor themselves and their families, or jeopardize their futures by cheating.
- 9) **Honor Pledge.** Encourage students to sign an honor pledge committing signers to uphold the honor of their school, the fairness of exams and their personal integrity by not giving or receiving assistance on exams, plagiarizing the work of others or otherwise acting dishonorably or dishonestly. (See pages 15 and 39.)
- 10) **Get Parents Involved.**
 - a) Provide tips for parents on how to instill academic integrity in their children (see the Notice to Parents Regarding Academic Integrity on page 16).
 - b) Require parents to sign the Acknowledgment (page 17) to be returned to the teacher.
 - c) Encourage parents to discuss integrity issues at home; provide the T.E.A.M. handout and discussion guidelines and questions (pages 7-10).

- d) Send home a copy of your school's Honor Code or Code of Conduct, including rules for taking exams (e.g., use of extraneous materials, talking and leaving the room).

Day of a Test

- 1) **Room set-up.** Assure that the venue is set up to make cheating difficult. Individual desks work better than communal tables.
- 2) **Seat assignments.** After students take their regular seats, reassign them randomly to assure that students do not know who they will be sitting next to. Also, if possible, seat students only in every other row or leave empty seats scattered throughout the class.
- 3) **Prohibit all extraneous items.** Require that all students check and store their backpacks and other materials not absolutely necessary for the test itself in the back (or front) of the room. *Students should have nothing on their desks or in their possession that is not necessary to the exam.*
 - a) Require that all electronic devices including cell phones, pagers, PDA's, earphones, radios, CD players, clocks, watches, etc. are kept in students' backpacks for the duration of the exam. Be sure there are easily readable clocks in the room.
 - b) Make it clear that possession of any unnecessary item during the exam will itself be considered a cheating violation and require that the student immediately be excluded from the exam.
 - c) If scratch paper is needed it should be provided with the exam. No papers should be brought in by students.
- 4) **Calculators.** Allow calculators only in subjects and exams where a calculator is truly necessary.
 - a) Where calculators are allowed, the preferred method is to provide school calculators for purposes of the exam that only allow the needed functions. If that is not possible, students must line up on entry to the test room and in front of the instructor or proctor clear the calculator's memory. An alternative is for the instructor to walk by each desk as students clear the memory.
 - b) Make it part of the rules and explicitly inform students orally at the beginning of the exam and in writing on the exam itself that it will be considered cheating if the calculator contains any sort of unauthorized information whether or not the information was used during the test.
- 5) **Proctor the exam vigilantly.** Every exam should be proctored, preferably by the teacher.
 - a) Proctors must not be seated at a desk or engaged in any other work that distracts them from providing continuous supervision and observation.
 - b) The proctor should continually and in varied and random order walk down each row watching the students work during the entire exam (this is especially important where calculators are allowed). Also, standing in the back of the room for brief periods makes it difficult for students to know where you are; those who keep checking are suspicious.
 - c) One teacher can effectively proctor a regular classroom of up to 35 students. If the test is in a lecture hall or very large classroom with more than 35 students multiple proctors should be assigned specific portions of the room.
 - d) The proctor should be looking not only for evidence of cheating (students talking, using assistive devices, etc.) but also suggestions of cheating (altered behavior, wearing clothes that could conceal assistive devices, etc.).
- 6) **Hand Check.** Perform a "hand check" right before passing out the test by asking students to hold up both hands so the teacher can be sure there are no scribbled notes.

- 7) **Desk Check.** When checking students' hands, also check desks and chair backs for any notes that may be written on the surface. Advise students to inform you immediately if they find anything written on their desks when they sit down, so they are not held accountable for it.
- 8) **Barriers.** In small rooms, it is especially important to use different forms of the test, but you might also consider the additional deterrence of creating barriers between students to hide their work (manila folders work well).
- 9) **Cover sheets.** Provide a blank sheet of paper for students to cover their answers, and remind them periodically throughout the exam to use it.
- 10) **Talking and signaling.** Once the exam has begun students should not be permitted to talk or signal each other in any way.
- 11) **Leaving the room.** Unless a student has a medical problem or an illness there is no reason why anyone should be allowed to leave the room once the test has begun.
 - a) Students should be reminded of this in the days before the exam and told to visit the restroom before the test.
 - b) Parents should be told of this policy in a notice so that they have an opportunity to talk to the teacher if their son or daughter has a particular problem that may require them to leave the room during the exam.
 - c) If a special case arises, the school should provide a staff person to accompany the student (the student will have to wait until one is summoned). When the student returns, the proctor should monitor the student's actions. Suspicious behavior includes: wandering eyes, fidgeting, unusual posture, checking for teacher's location.
- 12) **Acknowledgment.** On or with the answer sheet should be the following statement signed by the student. "I understand school policies concerning academic integrity and that I will be subject to discipline if I violate any part of the policy. I affirm that I did not give or receive any assistance on this exam."
- 13) **Collect all tests and answer sheets.** It is preferable for the teacher/proctor to pick up all answer sheets and test forms from each student and to count the test papers to assure that they have all been turned in (consider numbering the exams). Make it clear that it will be considered cheating if any student removes a test from the room.
- 14) **Photocopy a random sample.** Tell students you will make photocopies of random exams (answer sheets, Scantrons, etc.) prior to returning them to the class. This deters students from changing an incorrect answer and resubmitting the test for a higher score.
- 15) **Clear marks when grading.** When grading the test, clearly indicate incorrect answers using a mark in ink that passes through the answer.

Preventing, Detecting and Dealing With Plagiarism

- **Preventing Plagiarism**
 - **Specially construct writing assignments** in a way that deters copy-and-paste Internet plagiarism.
 - **Provide a list of highly specific topics;** the more specific a topic, the less likely a student will be able to find something on the Internet to copy wholesale. For example, instead of a report on George Washington, have students write about his accomplishments compared with those of Thomas Jefferson.
 - **Assign topics that require analysis of information, not mere presentation of facts.**
 - **Break the assignment into pieces,** emphasizing the writing process itself, and collecting parts of the paper throughout the writing process.
 - topic proposal
 - idea outline
 - multiple drafts
 - interim working bibliographies
 - photocopies of sources
 - **Have students complete some of the writing in class.** Nothing can replace personal observation.
 - **Affirmation.** Have students write out and sign an affirmation on their papers after completion and prior to submission for a grade.
 - The student affirms in writing that no unauthorized assistance was used on the assignment, then signs the statement. A sample affirmation:
 - I affirm on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.
 - **Note:** An affirmation is different from an honor pledge. An honor pledge is a promise made by students that they will not cheat or plagiarize, while an affirmation is made after completion of an academic exercise and certifies that the student upheld the pledge.
 - **Discuss with students what exactly constitutes plagiarism.** See “What Is Academic Dishonesty?” for specific examples.
 - **Teach students how to cite resources properly.** With all the different style guidelines, clear instructions are necessary to avoid confusion and misunderstandings. Show students exactly how you want them to cite their sources.
 - Web-based information on plagiarism can be found at <http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/samplagiarist.html>
 - **Reiterate your policy on plagiarism regularly.**
 - Remind students before major assignments that you expect them to adhere to the principles of academic honesty.
 - Keeping the issue at the forefront of their minds will make it harder for them to ignore.
 - **Enforce consequences consistently.**
 - If you have evidence of plagiarism, take action.
 - Do not selectively punish. This is unfair and sends the wrong message.
 - See Appendix A for a sample Honor Code you could adopt; it includes a policy on academic dishonesty as well as consequences for violations.
 - **Be aware of the free and fee-based term paper sites,** some of which are:
 - School Sucks (<http://www.schoolsucks.com>)

- Other People's Papers (<http://www.oppapers.com>)
 - Cheat House (<http://www.cheathouse.com>)
 - A+ Research Papers Online (<http://www.ezwrite.com>)
 - An extensive list of other "Internet Paper Mills" can be found at <http://www.coastal.edu/library/pubs/mills2.html>, or simply search for them on Google.
- **Detecting Plagiarism**
 - **Dead giveaways**
 - Mixed citation styles or a lack of citations
 - Signs of datedness (old statistics, etc.)
 - Inconsistencies in formatting and logic
 - **Use the plagiarism-detection services and software available on the Web.**
 - **TurnItIn.com** (also known as Plagiarism.org), <http://www.turnitin.com>
 - Fees vary depending on enrollment numbers, school type and the licensing plan you choose.
 - Teachers upload student papers and they are compared against a database of all previously uploaded papers, as well as published works (books, periodicals, etc.) and the Internet.
 - The teacher receives an "originality report" which is a duplicate of the uploaded papers, except that copied or paraphrased text appears underlined, color-coded and linked to its original online source.
 - Students can submit papers, too, to self-detect for inadvertent citation errors, etc.
 - **My Drop Box**, <http://www.mydropbox.com>
 - Fee structure varies depending on institution size.
 - Very similar to TurnItIn.com, but My Drop Box claims to have more user-friendly reports.
 - **EVE2** (Essay Verification Engine), <http://www.canexus.com/eve>
 - \$19.99 for unlimited use by a single teacher.
 - Teachers download software (as opposed to using an online service), which allows them to compare student papers to what is available on the Internet.
 - **Google**, <http://www.google.com>
 - Free.
 - Teachers enter a suspect string of words in quotation marks, and Google will return sites which have that exact phrase.
 - For instructions on how Google can be used as a simplistic plagiarism detector, visit <http://www.marywood.edu/library/detectplag.htm>.
 - **Dealing With Plagiarism**
 - Prepare evidence prior to meeting the accused.
 - Be respectful; pose questions, not accusations.
 - Counter rationalizations (see Rebuttals to Common Rationalizations).
 - If the student denies plagiarism but you still suspect it, test the student for content mastery.

Sources:

1. *The Plagiarism Handbook*, by Robert A. Harris (see <http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm> or <http://www.antiplagiarism.com/>)
2. *Cut-and-Paste Plagiarism: Preventing, Detecting and Tracking Online Plagiarism*, by Lisa Hinchliffe, <http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/~janicke/plagiary.htm>
3. *Dealing With Plagiarism Issues*, <http://www.rmcdenver.com/useguide/lessons/plagiar.htm>

Reducing Pressures That Encourage Cheating

In addition to a) setting clear guidelines of what constitutes cheating, b) eliminating the temptation to cheat and c) enforcing school cheating policies consistently, teachers have the responsibility to reduce the social and academic pressures that encourage cheating. One basic guideline to follow is to ask yourself, "Is this fair?" If students perceive a teacher is being unjust, they will feel compelled to compensate for the unfairness and turn to cheating.

Donelson R. Forsyth of Virginia Commonwealth University suggests several things educators can do toward this end.

- **Ensure your expectations are reasonable** for what students can demonstrate and accomplish given their age and any special circumstances (non-native English speakers, special education, etc.).
- **Establish clear grading criteria** (consider rubrics) and announce the criteria to the entire class for each assignment/exam.
- **Do not change grading criteria** once the assignments/tests are turned in.
- **Make sure it is explicitly clear what students will be tested on.** While we are not advocating going so far as to tell students what questions will be on the test, do avoid keeping the general content a mystery. If the test will cover chapters 1-5, say so.
- **Strive to create fair exams, which reflect the actual content taught** in the proportion spent on each topic, unless all students are notified in advance of what topic(s) will be emphasized.
- **Base the course grade on multiple assessments.** Do not have one exam that makes or breaks a student's grade. When the stakes are that high, students feel cheating is justifiable.
- **Make sure students have reasonably enough time to complete the assignment, project, or test you have assigned.** One week to complete a 15-page research paper is likely not sufficient.
- **Accept valid excuses** for late assignments and absences. The death of a relative is a common lie to get an extension but it is not fair to the student who really did suffer a loss if you have a no-exceptions policy. If you must, require documentation.
- **Consider allowing students to prepare an authorized "cheat sheet,"** one page or one index card of notes for use during the exam.
- **Do not by any means let cheating become an accepted norm** or allow a culture of tolerance toward cheating to develop.

See <http://www.people.vcu.edu/~jforsyth/tp/cheat.htm> for more information.

Rebuttals to Common Rationalizations for Cheating

The simple fact is that cheating is wrong. It is unethical and immoral, as it violates at least two core ethical values: trustworthiness and fairness. Most people who cheat, however, seek to shield themselves from this reality by rationalizations — self-satisfying but fundamentally fraudulent or fallacious explanations to justify their improper conduct. Young people are unusually prone to rationalize especially in the area of cheating. Since the impact of a rationalization is self-delusion, it allows cheaters to feel good about themselves despite their dishonest conduct. Thus, one method of promoting integrity is to respond to the various rationalizations with honest and rigorous reasoning that re-awakens the conscience. The following discussion can help you do a better job of stripping down the issues to their basic moral facts.

Rationalization #1: *Everyone cheats, so it can't be wrong.*

Rebuttal:

- First, the underlying premise is false. While lots of people do cheat, not everyone does. There are many people of integrity and character who resist the temptation, and society will be much better off if that number grows.
 - The rationalization evokes an attitude of relativism (i.e., ethics is determined by what people do rather than what they should do). Ethics is not about the “is,” it’s about the “ought.”
 - There is no “safety in numbers” when it comes to cheating. No matter how many people cheat at a particular time, cheating is and always has been wrong because it is fundamentally dishonest and unfair to those who do not cheat and to those who rely on test scores and grades. (Before the collapse of so many Wall Street firms for accounting frauds, many accountants and executives convinced themselves that filing false or misleading financial data was acceptable because it was common.)
-

Rationalization #2: *In the real world, cheaters prosper and honest people lose.*

Rebuttal:

- Unfortunately, many people do get away with cheating and reap short-term benefits as a result. But that is largely because parents and teachers have ignored it and sometimes even knowingly looked the other way. This is irresponsible and itself unethical.
 - In our post-Enron era, awareness of the economic and social costs of cheating has substantially changed institutional attitudes, and today the risks of getting caught and suffering a very serious consequence have increased dramatically.
 - If a youngster is caught cheating it can have long enduring impact, not merely on grades but on suspensions, expulsions and disqualification for admission to certain colleges.
 - Cheating demeans your character, destroys your reputation and creates a reputation that the cheater is willing to do whatever he or she has to in order to win. This reputation prevents trust.
 - Finally, ethics is much more than a cost-benefit analysis.
-

Rationalization #3: *If my teacher grades on a curve, I have to cheat to protect myself since it is certain that other students will cheat.*

Rebuttal:

- Again, there is some truth in the underlying premise that if others cheat, non-cheaters are at a disadvantage. That is one of the main reasons cheating must be stopped.
- This and many of the other rationalizations that follow attempt to use short-term self-interest as an acceptable justification for cheating. If this were so, we would have no basis for

objecting to people who lie on their résumés to get a job, or to executives who lie or cheat in their job to keep it or get a promotion, or to politicians who lie to get elected, or to people who steal because they don't have enough money to buy what they want. Ethics is not an option; it's a ground rule.

- People of character do the right thing even when it costs more than they want to pay.
 - In addition, grades are not the ultimate goal of education. They are not even accurate assessors if cheating is rampant. Better to have a B or C earned honestly than an A earned through deceit.
 - Remember: when you fight fire with fire, you end up with the ashes of your own integrity.
 - If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem. The proper response is to help reform the system and that will take the effort of parents, teachers and educational administrators as well as students.
-

Rationalization #4: *I need to cheat to get good grades to please my parents and get into a good college.*

Rebuttal:

- Do you think your parents really want you to get good grades at the cost of your integrity? Do you think your parents would approve of this strategy? If your parents find out you cheated they will be greatly disappointed, and if others find out as well they may be embarrassed or ashamed. If you are caught cheating, the costs far outweigh any benefit you can hope to accomplish.
 - It's true that colleges look at GPA's, and the elite schools require high grades, but they also require superior performance on SAT or ACT exams. If you do not concentrate on learning and building your intellectual skills through honest study and test-taking, you probably will not succeed on these tests.
 - It's unwise and self-defeating to obsess over getting into a particular college and to consider yourself a failure if you do not get into your first-choice school. You can succeed in life with a good education from any quality institution.
 - Even if you succeed in getting into an elite college by cheating you may not be able to compete if you really don't belong there. Will you cheat to stay there? Even if you graduate by cheating you will eventually have to get a job where you will be expected to perform.
 - Be careful not to overestimate the cost of doing the right thing and underestimate the cost of failing to do so.
-

Rationalization #5: *I have so much work, I simply don't have time to study.*

Rebuttal:

- This is an explanation that gives rise to an excuse but it certainly isn't a moral justification for cheating. Never sacrifice integrity for expediency.
 - Besides, time management and prioritization must be mastered in order to accomplish all that schools expect of students and that employers expect of employees.
 - It's better to do less, to cut down your commitments, than to take moral shortcuts that can have lasting negative impact on your character and your future.
-

Rationalization #6: *It doesn't matter if I cheat in classes that aren't important because I'll never need to know that stuff.*

Rebuttal:

- It really doesn't matter how useless you think a course may be, cheating is not right and you have no right to cheat other students and the teacher.

- Obviously the school thinks the course is part of a well-rounded education. You don't have to agree but you do have to play by the rules.
 - The penalties for cheating have nothing to do with your opinion of the value of the class or the quality of instruction.
 - A teacher in a difficult math course once told students on exam day, "Today you are taking two tests, one is in algebra and the other is in integrity. If you have to fail one of the tests, don't let it be in integrity."
 - A variation of the above rationalization is: *"It doesn't matter if I cheat on certain assignments, namely the "busy work" teachers assign that is never even graded or is counted as credit/no credit."* If the assignment really is so negligible, then it's not worth ruining your reputation and jeopardizing your future, is it?
-

Rationalization #7: *The class is simply too difficult and I can't get the grade I need if I don't cheat.*

Rebuttal:

- No one has a right to the grade they "need." In this world you are only entitled to the grade you earn. Think how much harmful dishonesty could be justified by this excuse – politicians who "need" to lie to win an election; business executives who have to lie to get a needed loan; athletes who need to use illegal performance-enhancing drugs to defeat a superior opponent.
 - Be careful about using necessity as a justification. It's often hard to distinguish what one really needs from what one simply wants. Nietzsche said, "Necessity is not a fact, it's an interpretation."
 - What's more, even if a particular grade is necessary to a particular result (e.g., getting into Stanford), under what theory is getting into a particular university truly necessary to your life?
 - Finally, and conclusively, personal necessity is not a moral justification for cheating.
-

Rationalization #8: *When I cheat, no one gets hurt. If anything, I'm only cheating myself.*

Rebuttal:

- Unfortunately, parents and teachers often perpetuate the myth that cheaters only cheat themselves. This reasoning is both wrong and strategically foolish.
 - It's wrong because cheaters don't just cheat themselves. There are lots of "stakeholders" who are harmed by cheating, including honest students who are put at a competitive disadvantage; legitimately qualified students who compete with the cheater's fraudulently inflated GPA; and college admissions officers and potential employers who think that a student's grade accurately reflects competence. What's more, cheaters dishonor their families, teachers and schools.
 - The reasoning is foolish because it is not likely to discourage a student from cheating. The idea behind the "you're cheating yourself" argument is that cheaters don't learn the subject and therefore cheat themselves out of an education. The problem is that most kids who cheat can comfortably live with not knowing the information, because they think that what they're asked to learn is unimportant. And as to mastering skills, cynical students could plausibly claim that learning to cheat may well be more useful than learning the material.
 - Finally, this rationalization implies that you shouldn't cheat because it's not in your self-interest. But as we've said in other ways, the moral obligation to live according to ethical principles is not dependent on whether it's advantageous. People of character do the right thing in the pursuit of virtue, not self-interest.
-

Rationalization #9: *I only cheat a little bit, like writing down formulas, and I don't do it all the time. I'm basically an honest person.*

Rebuttal:

- Just as a woman can't be a little bit pregnant, a student can't be a little bit dishonest. How many times do people get to lie before they are liars? How many times do people get to cheat before they are cheaters?
 - Cheating is a habit-forming coping mechanism. Once you begin rationalizing small infractions, it becomes easier to fall into big-league dishonesty. Cheating becomes your way to deal with any situation in which you want something you haven't earned.
 - Saying "I'm basically honest," means that you are willing to be honest unless it costs too much. You are willing to be honest as long as you get what you want. If you are willing to cheat when the stakes are high enough, you are a cheater.
-

Rationalization #10: *It's OK to cheat on pop quizzes, because those aren't fair. The teacher is just trying to trick us or punish us.*

Rebuttal:

- No matter how unfair a test or quiz might be, it does not under any circumstance justify cheating. As the saying goes, two wrongs don't make a right.
- If the teacher has made it known that pop quizzes are a possible form of assessment, it is your responsibility to be prepared every day for that possibility. Keep in mind, most teachers use pop quizzes as a way to motivate students to prepare (e.g., complete the assigned readings) in an ongoing and regular manner.
- Note to teachers: We encourage you to make clear at the beginning of the course your philosophy on and plans for interim testing .
 - Either announce when quizzes will occur, or
 - Announce there will be pop quizzes at various unexpected intervals, intended not as a punitive measure, but to create an incentive for students to always be prepared.

Special Circumstances Posed by Group Work

With cooperative learning being such a popular teaching technique these days, teachers are often faced with assessing assignments completed by a group of students. In these situations, there are gray areas as to what constitutes cheating. A group member who slacks off and lets the others carry him is indeed cheating because he is submitting work in his name that he did not actually assist in producing. But how is a teacher supposed to know how much work each group member did? Even trickier, how can a teacher prove that one group member didn't contribute his or her fair share?

There is no magic-bullet answer to solve this age-old dilemma, so the best way to cope with the situation is to try the following techniques:

- ❖ **Clarity.** Make it clear to students which assignments are individual work, and which ones are group work. Also, explain what they will be evaluated on for the group work: process, product, or both. In other words, are they being graded on their teamwork, or on the outcome?
- ❖ **Structure.** Configure the assignment so that each student has a particular role to play and product to create. For example, each student is responsible for a different section of a report, or a different part of a poster.
- ❖ **Observation.** Have as much of the group work take place in class as possible. Then you can observe group efforts and ensure that all participate equally.
- ❖ **Self-assessment.** After completion of the assignment, have group members fill out a form on which they state what they contributed to the group and what the others contributed. (See a sample form: <http://www.flinders.edu.au/teach/assess/tut/grpeval.htm>)
- ❖ **Follow-up assessment.** Quiz students to evaluate whether they reached the content objectives of the group assignment.

For more information on and tools for assessing group work, see the following sites:

Name of website	Address	Summary
Five practical guides for assessing group learning	http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/assessinglearning/03/group.html	The case for group learning, common concerns, designing and assessing group activities
Cooperative learning project rubric A	http://ctls.concordia.ca/pdf/resources/cooperative%20learning%20project_rubric%20A.pdf	Rubric for assessing group work when the process is the objective
Cooperative learning project rubric B	http://ctls.concordia.ca/pdf/resources/cooperative%20learning%20project_rubric%20B.pdf	Rubric for assessing group work when the product is the objective
Assessing Groups	http://www.flinders.edu.au/teach/assess/tut/grpwrk.htm	Online tutorial in assessment with module on group work

Appendix A: Sample Honor Code

Portions adapted from University of Pennsylvania's Code of Academic Integrity
<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>

Preamble

We the stakeholders of ___(insert school name)___ are dedicated to promoting a learning environment based on the foundation of personal integrity. We are also committed to assuring that our students do not demean their character, damage their credibility or jeopardize their futures by engaging in any form of academic dishonesty. Therefore, we present the following Code, which will govern the academic conduct of students, teachers and administrators.

I. All forms of academic dishonesty as defined below are strictly forbidden and will result in disciplinary action.

A. Cheating on Exams - using or attempting to use unauthorized assistance, material or study aids during an examination, including but not limited to:

1. Copying from others.
2. Having or using notes, formulas or other information in a programmable calculator or other electronic device without explicit teacher review and permission.
3. Having or using a communication device such as a cell phone, pager, PDA or electronic translator to send or obtain unauthorized information.
4. Taking an exam for another student, or permitting someone else to take a test for you.
5. Asking another to give you improper assistance, including offering money or other benefits.
6. Asking for or accepting money or any other benefit in return for giving another improper assistance.
7. Providing or receiving information about all or part of an exam, including answers (e.g., telling someone in a subsequent period what was on your exam, or being told this information).
8. Having or using a "cheat sheet" (i.e., a piece of paper with answers, formulas, information or notes) that is not specifically authorized by the teacher.
9. Altering a graded exam and resubmitting it for a better grade.
10. Working together on a take-home exam unless specifically authorized by the teacher.
11. Gaining or providing unauthorized access to examination materials.

Note: Simply having possession during an exam of any prohibited or unauthorized information or device, whether or not it is actually used, is an act of academic dishonesty and will be dealt with as such.

B. Plagiarism in Papers and Assignments - using the ideas, data or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment, including but not limited to:

1. Giving or getting improper assistance on an assignment meant to be individual work. (When in doubt, ask.)
2. Including in any assignment turned in for credit any materials not based on your own research and writing. This includes:
 - a. Using the services of a commercial term paper company.
 - b. Using the services of another student.
 - c. Copying part or all of another person's paper and submitting it as your own for an assignment.
3. Acting as a provider of paper(s) for a student or students.
4. Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without consulting both teachers (self-plagiarism).
5. Failing to use quotation marks where appropriate.
6. Failing to properly acknowledge paraphrased materials via textual attribution, footnotes, endnotes and/or a bibliography.
7. Making up data for an experiment ("fudging data").
8. Citing nonexistent sources (articles, books, etc.).

C. Other forms of Academic Dishonesty

1. Misrepresenting your academic accomplishments, such as by tampering with computer records.
2. Deceiving a teacher or making up a false reason or excuse to get special consideration on an exam or an extension for an exam or paper.
3. Failing to promptly stop work on an exam when the time allocated has elapsed.
4. Forging a signature.
5. Hoarding or damaging library materials.
6. Misrepresenting academic records, such as tampering with any portion of a student's academic record.
7. Facilitating academic dishonesty (i.e., knowingly helping another violate any provision of the Code).
8. Gaining unfair advantage (i.e., attempting to gain unauthorized advantage over fellow students in an academic exercise)
 - a. Gaining or providing access to exam materials.
 - b. Lying about needing a deadline extension.
 - c. Continuing after time is up on a test.

Note: Attempted academic dishonesty, even if unsuccessful, will be treated as academic dishonesty.

II. Consequences

Disciplinary action will be taken commensurate with the offense. All teachers and administrators are expected to enforce the rules and consequences of the Code uniformly.

A. First offense

1. Warning (for a minor infraction only, such as glancing at another student's paper)
2. Score of zero (F) on the test, paper or assignment
3. Conference with teacher, parent and student
4. Assignment of additional work or re-testing

B. Second offense

1. Grade of F in the course
2. Conference with teacher, parent and student, and principal or assistant principal
3. Disciplinary probation

C. Third offense

1. Grade of F in the course
2. Conference with teacher, parent and student, and principal or assistant principal
3. Suspension or expulsion

Note: Instances of clearly premeditated attempts at cheating, or schemes that reveal attempts at coordination beyond an individual level, may warrant treatment of first offenses as second offenses.

III. Exam procedures

To ensure testing security, teachers will adopt the following procedures:

- A. Access to Exam.** Keep the exam secure by locking it up in a drawer or cabinet. Do not leave copies of the exam lying around on your desk, on a table in front of the room, or sitting in your office mailbox. Also, do not forget the master in the photocopier. Do not leave your computer unattended while composing the exam. If the exam is to be saved on your hard drive, make sure your computer is password-protected.
- B. Modify Former Questions.** If you intend to re-use any objective questions that you have used before, change the wording slightly and change the order of the options to foil any cheater who might try to memorize answers without understanding the question.
- C. Alternate Versions.** If your test includes objective questions, make at least two versions of the test, putting the questions in a different order. Distribute tests so that students sitting next to each other will have different forms of the test.
- D. Alternative or Combined Exams.** If you have two or more classes that will be tested at different times you must not give the same test in, say, second period as you give in fifth period. Some students will tip-off others about what is on the exam, creating an unfair advantage. Either find a way of combining the test in a single period, or prepare different tests for each class.

- E. Exam Booklets.** If you will require students to write in exam booklets, have each student turn in an empty one the day prior to the exam. Redistribute the books randomly on the day of the exam. This prevents students from writing notes in their booklet.
- F. Counsel Students.** Periodically, as well as immediately before the exam, explicitly discuss the rules demanding academic integrity and the seriousness of the consequences for students caught violating these rules. In addition, seek to inspire personal commitment by stating high expectations and confidence that students will not betray their teacher's trust, seek unfair advantage over their classmates, dishonor themselves and their families, or jeopardize their futures by cheating.
- G. Honor Pledge.** Encourage students to sign an honor pledge stating that they will uphold the honor of their school, the fairness of exams and their personal integrity by not giving or receiving assistance on exams, plagiarizing the work of others or otherwise acting dishonorably or dishonestly.
- H. Room set-up.** Assure that the venue is set up to make cheating difficult. Individual desks work better than communal tables.
- I. Seat assignments.** After students take their regular seats, reassign them randomly to assure that students do not know who they will be sitting next to. Also, if possible, seat students only in every other row or leave empty seats scattered throughout the class.
- J. Prohibit all extraneous items.** Require that all students check and store their backpacks and other materials not absolutely necessary for the test itself in the back of the room. *Students should have nothing on their desks or in their possession that is not necessary to the exam.*
1. Require that all electronic devices including cell phones, pagers, PDA's, earphones, radios, CD players, clocks, etc. are kept in students' backpacks for the duration of the exam. Be sure there are easily readable clocks in the room.
 2. Make it clear that possession of any unnecessary item during the exam will itself be considered a cheating violation and require that the student immediately be excluded from the exam.
 3. If scratch paper is needed it should be provided with the exam. No papers should be brought in by students.
- K. Calculators.** Allow calculators only in subjects and exams where a calculator is truly necessary.
1. Where calculators are allowed, the preferred method is to provide school calculators for purposes of the exam that only allow the needed functions. If that is not possible, students must line up on entry to the test room and in front of the instructor or proctor clear the calculator's memory. An alternative is for the instructor to walk by each desk as students clear the memory.
 2. Make it part of the rules and explicitly inform students orally at the beginning of the exam and in writing on the exam itself that it will be considered cheating if the calculator contains any sort of unauthorized information whether or not the information was used during the test.
- L. Proctor the exam vigilantly.** Every exam should be proctored, preferably by the teacher.
1. Proctors must not be seated at a desk or engaged in any other work that distracts them from providing continuous supervision and observation.
 2. The proctor should continually and in varied and random order walk down each row watching students work during the entire exam (this is especially important where calculators are allowed).
 3. One teacher can effectively proctor a regular classroom of up to 35 students. If the test is in a lecture hall or very large classroom with more than 35 students multiple proctors should be assigned specific portions of the room.
 4. The proctor should be looking not only for evidence of cheating (students talking, using assistive devices, etc.) but also suggestions of cheating (altered behavior, wearing clothes that could conceal assistive devices, etc.).
- M. Hand Check.** Perform a "hand check" right before passing out the test by asking students to hold up both hands so the teacher can be sure there are no scribbled notes.

- N. Desk Check.** When checking students' hands, also check desks and chair backs for any notes that may be written on the surface. Advise students to inform you immediately if they find anything written on their desks when they sit down, so they are not held accountable for it.
- O. Barriers.** In small rooms, it is especially important to use different forms of the test, but you might also consider the additional deterrence of creating barriers between students to hide their work (manila folders work well).
- P. Cover sheets.** Provide a blank sheet of paper for students to cover their answers, and remind them periodically throughout the exam to use it.
- Q. Talking and signaling.** Once the exam has begun students should not be permitted to talk or signal each other in any way.
- R. Leaving the room.** Unless a student has a medical problem or an illness there is no reason why anyone should be allowed to leave the room once the test has begun.
 1. Students should be reminded of this in the days before the exam and told to visit the restroom before the test.
 2. Parents should be told of this policy in a notice so that they have an opportunity to talk to the teacher if their son or daughter has a particular problem that may require them to leave the room during the exam.
 3. If a special case arises, the school should provide a staff person to accompany the student (the student will have to wait until one is summoned). When the student returns, the proctor should monitor the student's actions.
- S. Acknowledgment and affirmation.** On or with the answer sheet should be the following statement signed by the student. "I understand school policies concerning academic integrity and that I will be subject to discipline if I violate any part of the policy." Optionally, the student can add: "I affirm that I did not give or receive any assistance on this exam."
- T. Collect all tests and answer sheets.** It is preferable for the teacher/proctor to pick up all answer sheets and test forms from each student and to count the test papers to assure that they have all been turned in (consider numbering the exams). Make it clear that it will be considered cheating if any student removes a test from the room.
- U. Photocopy a random sample.** Tell students you will make photocopies of random exams (answer sheets, Scantrons, etc.) prior to returning them to the class. This deters students from changing an incorrect answer and resubmitting the test for a higher score.
- V. Clear marks when grading.** When grading the test, clearly indicate incorrect answers using a mark in ink that passes through the answer.

IV. Promoting an Atmosphere Conducive to Integrity

- A. Provide information to all students equally** about what the test will cover, how it will be graded and the weight of the grade on the exam in relation to the final course grade
- B. Make former tests available to all students,** if they are available to any students.
- C. Ensure your expectations are reasonable** for what students can demonstrate and accomplish given their age and any special circumstances (non-native English speakers, special education, etc.).
- D. Establish clear grading criteria** (consider rubrics) and announce the criteria to the entire class for each assignment/exam.
- E. Do not change grading criteria** once the assignments/tests are turned in.
- F. Make sure it is explicitly clear what students will be tested on.** Avoid keeping the general content a mystery.
- G. Strive to create fair exams, which reflect the actual content taught** in the proportion spent on each topic, unless all students are notified in advance of what topic(s) will be emphasized.

- H. **Base the course grade on multiple assessments.** Do not have one exam that makes or breaks a student's grade. When the stakes are that high, students feel cheating is justifiable.
- I. **Make sure students have reasonably enough time to complete the assignment,** project, or test you have assigned.
- J. **Accept valid excuses** for late assignments and absences.
- K. **Consider allowing students to prepare an authorized page or index card of notes** for use during the exam.
- L. **Do not by any means let cheating become an accepted norm** or allow a culture of tolerance toward cheating to develop.
- V. **Honor Pledge (to be voluntarily written and signed at the beginning of the year)**
I pledge on my honor that I will not give or receive any unauthorized assistance on any assignment/examination.
- VI. **Affirmation (to be voluntarily written and signed on every assignment and exam)**
I affirm on my honor that I did not give or receive any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.

Appendix B: Honor Code from Norfolk Collegiate School

From <http://www.academicintegrity.org/norfolk.htm>

Norfolk Collegiate School

Institutional Demographics

- Private, coeducational, college preparatory school enrolling students in Kindergarten through grade 12
- Enrollment of 854 students in 2002-03

Honor Code

Norfolk Collegiate School students pledge that they have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on any test or assignment. Students are strongly encouraged, though not required, to report violations of the honor code.

Honor Council

Students in middle school (grades 6-8) have an honor council with 2 representatives elected from each grade. Students in upper school (grades 9-12) have an honor council with 2 freshmen, 2 sophomores, 2 juniors (who remain on the council for their senior year), and 3 seniors who are elected by their peers in the respective grades. Student representatives serve on the honor council for one year and are responsible for educating their peers about the honor code and for hearing cases on honor code violations, determining the student's guilt or innocence, and recommending sanctions to the Dean of Students.

Faculty

Faculty members are encouraged to demonstrate trust in students and to engage students in regular discussions about the importance of mutual trust and respect and the damage caused by academic dishonesty in the Norfolk Collegiate community. Faculty are also urged by the honor council to take precautions to prevent academic dishonesty, including:

- Clearly stating the honor code and its relevance to homework, projects, tests, other assignments and tests on the course syllabus and engaging students in a discussion of the honor code on the first day of class
- Clearly explaining the parameters of assignments, including how much collaboration, if any, is acceptable
- Avoiding testing and grading procedures that create temptations to violate the honor code (for example, giving alternate tests for different course sections and for students taking a test early or late)

Initiatives

A significant tradition at Norfolk Collegiate School is the promotion of an important goal or issue chosen as the school-wide theme for each academic year. Academic integrity, the school-wide theme for 2002-2003, continues to be promoted through programs and events throughout the school year, including:

- Presentation by the honor council of the philosophy and procedures of the Norfolk Collegiate Honor system televised in classrooms to all students in grades 6-12 (September)
- Guest speaker, Dr. Dana Burnett, Vice President for Student Services at Old Dominion University, addressed students in grades 9-12 about the importance of integrity (September)

- Honor council senior representatives addressed students in grades 6-8 about the importance of integrity (September)
- Guidance counselor for grades K-5 visited classrooms to discuss character, honesty, and integrity (September – October)
- Students in grades K-5 participated in an assembly featuring a local police officer and puppet friend with a ventriloquist presentation about character, honesty, and integrity issues (January)
- **INTEGRITY WEEK** (January 2003) for grades 6-12, featuring:
 - presentation of framed honor code pledge signed by all students in grades 9-12 to Headmaster Will King (to be displayed in the school)
 - program for students in grades 9-12 on ***Integrity in the Workplace***, with guest speaker, Dr. Yvette Pearson, Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Old Dominion University
 - special edition of "Oak Leaflet," NCS school newspaper, featuring integrity issues
 - programs for students in grades 6-8 and 9-12 on ***Academic Integrity at Norfolk Collegiate and Beyond***, with guest speaker, Mr. Chris Smith, Chair of the Honor Committee at the University of Virginia
- Two NCS seniors are developing a proposal for a video about Honor at Norfolk Collegiate School for presentation to all students upon its completion and to all new students in subsequent years
- The three senior members of the Honor Council visited the Lower School campus to meet with students in grades 4-5 about honor and integrity in Spring 2003

For more information, contact Karen Clifford at Kclifford@ncs.pvt.k12.va.us or visit <http://ncs.pvt.k12.va.us/integrity.html>.

Appendix C: **Honor Pledge Frequently Asked Questions**

*Derived from University of Maryland's Office of Judicial Programs and Student Ethical Development,
<http://www.jpo.umd.edu/aca/FAQ.html>*

Q: What is the Honor Pledge designed to accomplish?

A: The Honor Pledge is designed to encourage teachers and students to reflect upon the value of academic integrity. Use of the Pledge affirms students' pride in their work, and communicates that teachers and students understand that there is an ethical component to education.

Q: Do honor pledges suggest students cannot be trusted?

A: No. People who enter a profession or assume public office often sign an oath or affirmation. Doing so is considered an honor, not an insult. For students, the Pledge reflects their public statement of support for academic excellence, including the highest standards for academic integrity.

Q: Is there any evidence pledges or public affirmations make a difference in attitudes or behavior?

A: Yes. One study showed that making "public commitments, even seemingly minor ones, direct future action." In other words, people who make public commitments usually endeavor to fulfill them. National research has shown that schools with traditional honor codes — including pledge requirements — have significantly lower rates of academic dishonesty than schools without honor codes. In addition, anecdotal evidence supports that even many years after attending a school with a Pledge, former students can recite the pledge verbatim. For more information, see http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/perspective/pers14_2jan95_7.html

Q: Why are students asked to write the Pledge by hand, as well as to sign it?

A: The purpose of asking students to write the Pledge by hand is to promote a period of serious reflection at the end of an academic exercise. The few moments required to write the pledge by hand reminds students that the paper of examination they are submitting is governed by the ethical rules of a scholarly community. Alumni from schools with honor pledges remember the wording of the pledge not only because it is reiterated, but because the practice of writing the pledge creates an unusual and deliberate context.

Q: Is writing and signing the pledge required?

A: No, it should be voluntary.

Q: How can a pledge be effective if it isn't compulsory?

A: The highest forms of moral development require freedom to choose, not compulsion. The Honor Pledge is meant to reflect a personal commitment. It should spark thought and debate. A principled decision not to write and sign the pledge - discussed and explained in an atmosphere of mutual respect - would likely do more to promote the academic integrity than ritualistic compliance.

Q: What if a student refuses to write or sign the pledge?

A: Most students will readily write and sign the Pledge, especially if the teacher reminds them. If they forget, they should be given a chance to add it. If the student intentionally did not write and

sign the Pledge, the teacher should ask for an explanation. The ensuing discussion is an opportunity to emphasize the importance of academic integrity. Nonetheless, students remain free to decline to write or sign the Pledge and face no penalty for doing so. However, they should be reminded that they will still be held accountable to the Code of Academic Integrity.

Q: Do colleges and universities use honor pledges?

A: Many leading universities, including Princeton University, the University of Virginia, the University of North Carolina, Wesleyan University, Vanderbilt University, Rice University, Oberlin College, and the University of Maryland use honor pledges. Many, many more use Honor Codes. See http://www.academicintegrity.org/samp_honor_codes.asp.

Appendix D: Bibliography/Other Useful Resources

Websites

In addition to those already listed throughout this resource, below are websites used in the preparation of this booklet. They contain further information you may find useful in your efforts to promote integrity and prevent academic dishonesty.

Name of website	Address	Summary
University of Maryland's Student Honor Council	http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html	Sample Code of Academic Integrity, sample Honor Pledge, info on student ethical development
Duke University's Center for Academic Integrity	http://www.academicintegrity.org/	A comprehensive website with links to many resources on how to get started at your school
University of Oklahoma Instructional Development Program	http://www.ou.edu/idp/tips/ideas/quick17.html	Make cheating "not cool," "not necessary," "not easy," and "not pleasurable"
Preventing Academic Dishonesty	http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/prevent.html	Tips for high school teachers
Preventing Plagiarism	http://www.plagiarized.com/prevention.html	Guidelines for teachers and parents
Internet Research: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly	http://www.gananda.k12.ny.us/library/mshslibrary/plagiarism3.htm	Information and resources for detecting and preventing high-tech plagiarism as well as evaluating the internet sources students use
ABC News Primetime	http://abcnews.go.com/sections/Primetime/US/cheating_040429-1.html	An article corresponding to the special which aired April 29, 2004
Education World	http://www.educationworld.com/	Search for "cheating" and you'll find many articles with useful tips
Teachopolis	http://teachopolis.org/justice/justice.htm	Methods used by students to cheat, how they get away with it, and how they get caught
Indiana University	http://www.indiana.edu/~teaching/cheating.html	Matrix presenting type of academic dishonesty with corresponding prevention and detection techniques

Books

Although not reviewed or endorsed by the Josephson Institute, these books provide further insight into the issue of promoting academic integrity and preventing dishonesty.

Name of book	Author(s)	Summary
<i>Student Cheating and Plagiarism in the Internet Era: A Wake-Up Call</i>	Ann Lathrop, Kathleen Foss	How to detect plagiarism and cheating, including sample academic integrity policies, reproducible lessons, and lists of resources.
<i>The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead</i>	David Callahan	Callahan posits that cheating has risen dramatically in the last two decades due to the brutal economic climate. He says that democracy itself is threatened by values that have been corrupted by extreme economic inequality.
<i>Detecting and Preventing Classroom Cheating: Promoting Integrity in Assessment</i>	Gregory J. Cizek	Strategies on how to detect, deal with, and discourage cheating, with the goal of promoting more accurate assessment of student achievement.

Appendix E: Glossary

- **Acknowledgment** - a signed statement that indicates an understanding of the Honor Code's rules, and the consequences for violating them.
- **Affirmation** – similar to a pledge but made after completion of an academic exercise rather than before. The student affirms in writing that no unauthorized assistance was used on that particular assignment/exam.
- **Cheating** – in an academic setting, cheating refers to any illegal or improper act intended to help a student improve a test score or grade.
- **Code of Academic Integrity** – see Honor Code.
- **Honesty**
 - **Honesty in communication** includes **truthfulness** (commitment to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth), **sincerity** (avoidance of deliberate deception or distortion) and **candor** (willingness to volunteer information to correct errors or dishonesty).
 - **Honesty in action** requires following laws and rules, playing fair and avoiding all forms of cheating.
- **Honor Code** – a systematic and enforceable code of rules and consequences by which student academic conduct is governed, regardless of an individual student's consent or lack thereof. Often called Code of Academic Integrity.
- **Honor Pledge** – a promise voluntarily made by students that they will not commit any act of academic dishonesty.
- **Plagiarism** – using the words and thoughts of another without attribution, usually in order to attain an unearned grade or to avoid the effort involved in original research and writing; seeking to take credit for someone else's work.
- **Trustworthiness** – an ethical value that includes traits of character such as integrity, honesty and promise-keeping that generate trust.