Texas Tech University

Arbor Day Academic Integrity Survey Report

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Report Summary

It has become an honored and respected tradition at Texas Tech University (TTU) to celebrate Arbor Day in conjunction with Strive for Honor Week. On April 26, 2013 at Memorial Circle, the Tech University Ethics Center collaboratively with the Center for Campus Life, and the Division of Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs hosted two academic integrity themed events. These events intended to enhance student's appreciation for the academic integrity culture at TTU. One such event invited students to complete the TTU Academic Integrity Survey. The survey is a written assessment of students' perceptions of values and behaviors associated with academic integrity. The survey consists of 5 demographic questions (classification, gender, major, national or international origin, and age), a 5 item academic integrity values subscale, and a 6 item academic integrity behaviors subscale. In addition, 3 open ended questions are added in order to capture qualitative data on a specified academic integrity topic (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey). Participants who completed the survey were offered a commemorative T-shirt emblazoned with the words "Strive for Honor Texas Tech". Participation in the survey was voluntary and responses were anonymous. The completed surveys were analyzed by the Texas Tech University Ethics Center.

This year, a total of 797 surveys were completed by a representative sample of the TTU student population. The results of the quantitative portion of the survey indicate that students at TTU have a high regard for values and a moderate regard for behaviors associated with academic integrity. The average score for the entire sample was 18.41 (scale = 0-20) and 20.85 (scale= 0-30) or 92% and 69% for values and behaviors respectively. In general, female students, and students of national origin demonstrated a higher regard for values and behaviors relative to their counterparts. While no significant differences were found for student classification and age. Major was not included in the analysis of variance. Results of the qualitative portion of the survey suggest that a majority of students at TTU are willing to report peers who engage in academic misconduct. Prevalent reasons given for reporting a peer were "it's the right thing to do" and the unfair gain obtained by cheating. A relatively smaller group indicated that they would not report peers engaged in academic misconduct based their disinterest in getting involved. Lastly, students at TTU cited laziness and the need to score a higher grade as reasons for why students cheat.

Administering the TTU Academic Integrity Survey enhances the academic integrity climate at TTU by reinforcing student knowledge about academic integrity and understanding the perceptions of students on specific values and behaviors relative to academic integrity. This data, in turn, yields valuable information that allows for the development of new programs and interventions which contribute to the perpetual cycle of improvement at TTU.

Introduction

The Texas Tech University Ethics Center in collaboration with the Center for Campus Life, and the Division of Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs hosted several events during the joint celebration of Arbor Day and Strive for Honor week at Texas Tech University. Central to these events was the administration of the TTU Academic Integrity Survey. For two hours, nearly 1,000 students completed the survey TTU Academic Integrity Survey. Administering the survey has traditionally served to reinforce the academic integrity climate of TTU by assessing students' knowledge and perceptions about academic integrity, (2) assessing their perceptions of values and behaviors associated with academic integrity, and (3) by identifying areas of vulnerability within the realm of academic integrity to which TTU may wish to commit efforts and develop intervention programs.
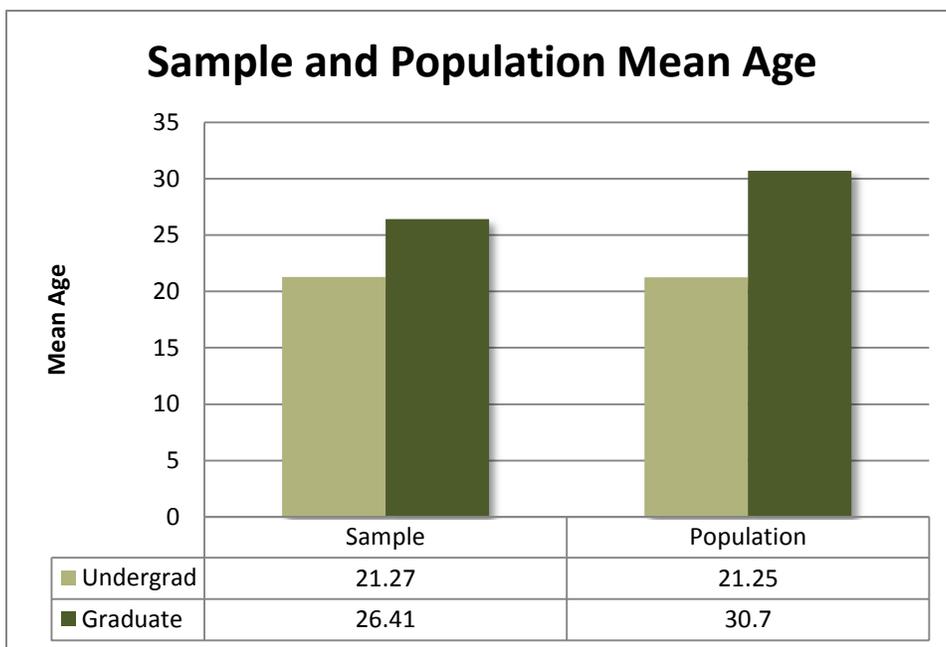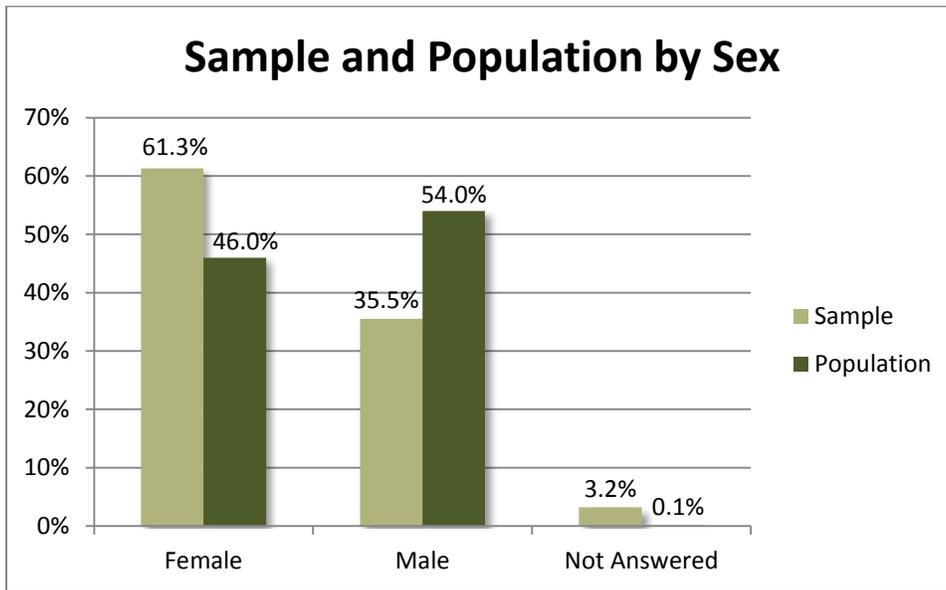
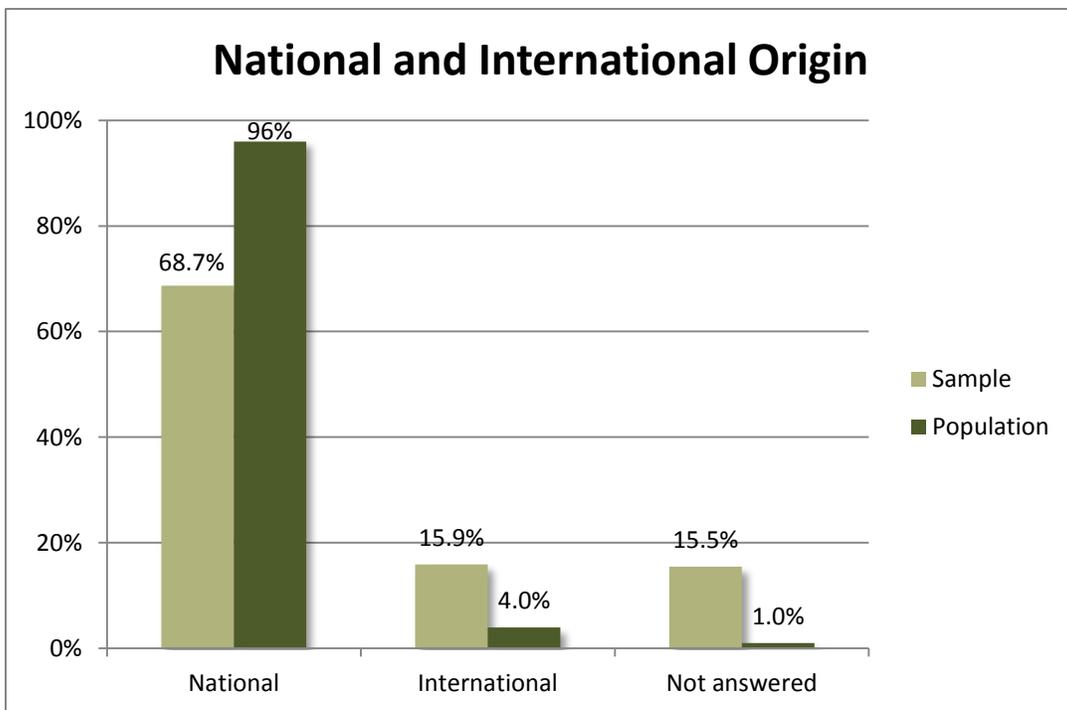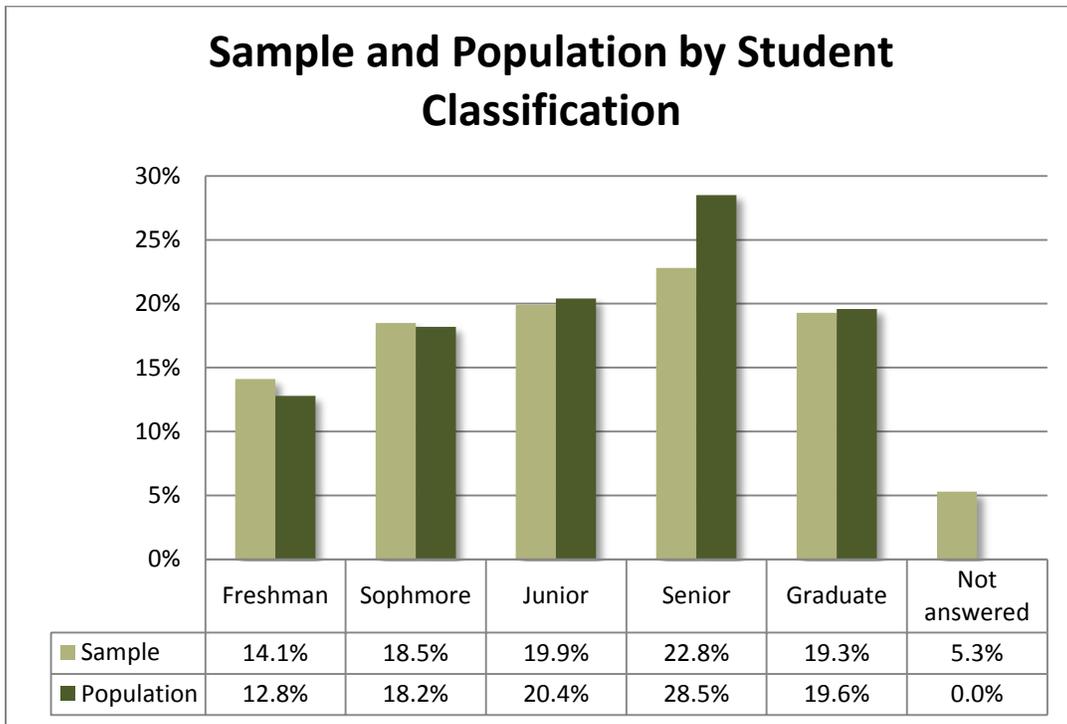## Data Preparation and Sample

A total of 797 surveys were collected. Of these, 45 had all demographic information omitted and two had been completed by staff not currently enrolled as students. The data for the completed surveys was analyzed by staff from the TTU Ethics Center using IBM SPSS statistical software.

The sample of 750 valid surveys represents approximately 3% of the student population of the Texas Tech University. Demographic data collected by the survey includes the following five categories: (1) classification, (2) major, (3) gender, (4) age, and (5) national or international origin.

Specifically in terms of student demographics, a pronounced discrepancy was found regarding gender where the sample included nearly 14% more females and approximately 20% less males than in the student population. In terms of age, the average for undergraduate student was 21.27 (SD .164) and for graduate students it was 26.41 (SD .378). When comparing the sample to the student population in terms of undergraduate and graduate classification, the sample mirrored the population with 80% undergraduate students and 20% graduate students respectively. Given the extensive number of majors represented at TTU, majors were grouped by college affiliation. Lastly, students of international origin were oversampled by approximately 10%. While a fairly good student by college representation was obtained relative to the variables of interest, a sample bias may exist due to the location where the survey was administered. This may be particularly true to students from the College of Education, College of Visual and Performing Arts, Rawls College of Business Administration and Media and Communication whose students were under represented in the sample.

The following graphs and table summarize the representativeness of the sample relative to the TTU student population in terms of gender, age, classification, national or international origin, and college affiliation.

Sample and Population by Sex

Female — Sample: 61.3%, Population: 46.0%
Male — Sample: 35.5%, Population: 54.0%
Not Answered — Sample: 3.2%, Population: 0.1%

Legend: Sample, Population

Sample and Population Mean Age

Mean Age

	Sample	Population
Undergrad	21.27	21.25
Graduate	26.41	30.7

Sample and Population by Student Classification

	Freshman	Sophmore	Junior	Senior	Graduate	Not answered
■ Sample	14.1%	18.5%	19.9%	22.8%	19.3%	5.3%
■ Population	12.8%	18.2%	20.4%	28.5%	19.6%	0.0%

National and International Origin

National: Sample 68.7%, Population 96%
International: Sample 15.9%, Population 4.0%
Not answered: Sample 15.5%, Population 1.0%

Sample distribution by college

College	Sample n	Sample %	Pop n	Pop %
Engineering	39	5.17%	4,593	15.12%
Arts and Science	179	23.75%	8,844	29.12%
Agriculture	40	5.3%	1,755	5.80%
Business (BA)	51	6.76%	4,222	13.90%
Education	22	2.91%	1,751	5.76%
Human Science	22	2.91%	3,025	10%
Mass Communications	5	>1%	1,338	4.40%
Visual & Performing Arts	6	>1%	1,048	3.45%
Undeclared	2	>1%	2,051	6.75%
Not answered	203	26.93%	N/A	N/A

As evidenced by the preceding graphs and table, the sample was a fairly good representation of the TTU student population with the exception of the variables previously noted.

Results

The 2013 installment of the TTU Academic Integrity Survey was comprised of two sections. The first section included an instrument with two subscales intended to measure quantitatively student perceptions of values and behaviors relative to academic integrity. The qualitative portion of the survey intends to reveal students willingness or unwillingness to report a peer who is engaged in an act of academic misconduct, why they would or would not be willing to report such student, and finally a question that captures narratives regarding why students cheat.

Quantitative Analysis

The TTU Academic Integrity Survey was created as a Likert scale and divided into two subscales. The first subscale, the Academic Integrity Values Scale (AIVS), includes five items pertinent to integrity and ethical values in academia and asks students to rate how important a particular value is to them. Scores for this subscale range from zero through twenty. The second subscale labeled as the *Academic Integrity Behaviors Scale* (AIBS), includes six items that describe behaviors associated with violations of academic integrity principles. Scores for this subscale range from zero through twenty-four. The average score for the entire sample was 18.41 (scale = 0-20) and 20.85 (scale= 0-30) or 92% and 69% for AIVS and AIBS respectively.

The following table shows the frequency of responses for each item of the AIVS and the AIBS respectively.

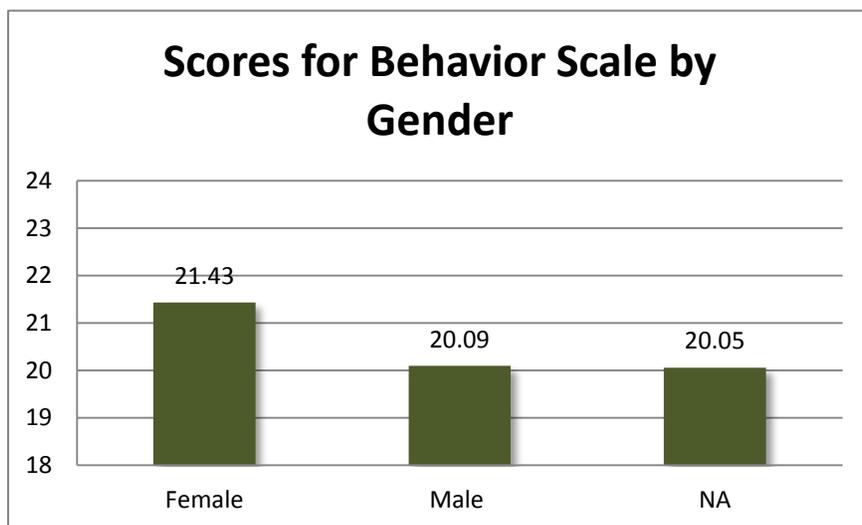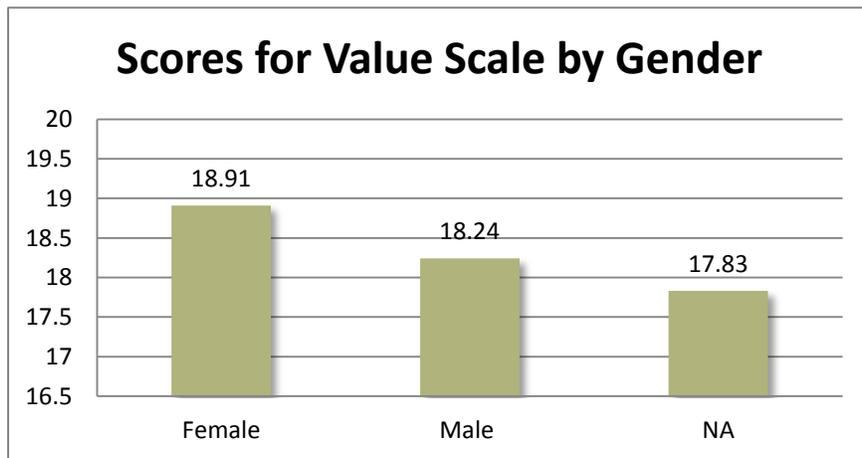| Academic Integrity Value Statement	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	Not answered
Academic Integrity means that you are accountable for your own work.	8	21	171	591	6
Making a personal decision to adhere to the standards of ethical behavior is part of academic integrity.	5	19	189	576	8
Ethical behavior and independent thought are important for achieving academic success.	5	24	171	588	9
Trust and respect among students, faculty, and staff are essential components of education.	5	19	147	616	10
Academic Integrity is the foundation of professional and educational careers.	5	25	151	604	12

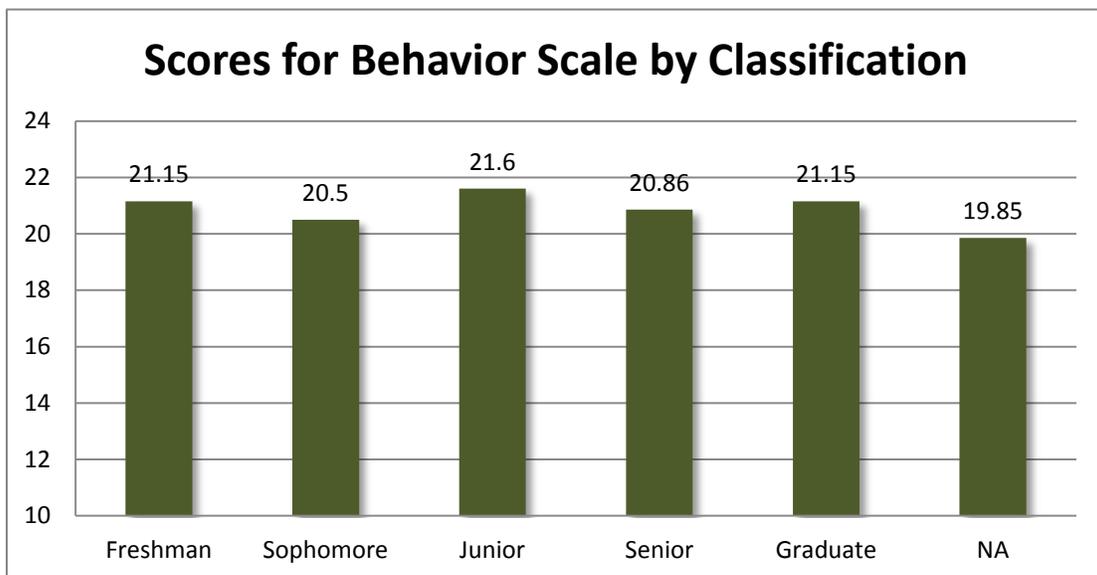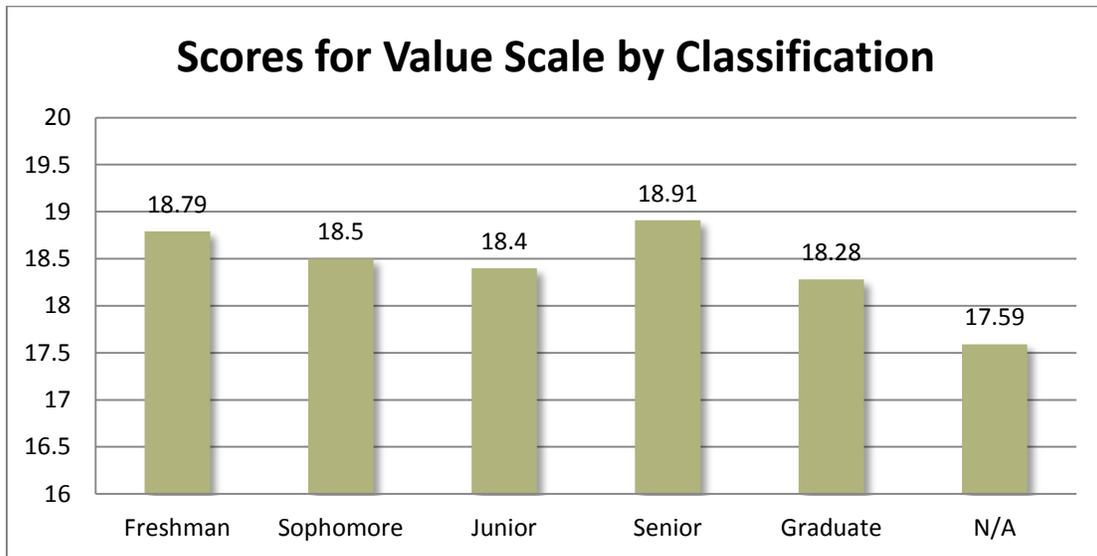| Academic Integrity Behavior Statement	Not at all bad	Somewhat bad	Bad	Very bad	Not answered
Don't worry about plagiarism if you use the web; things from the web do not need to be cited.	23	69	180	520	5
Copying from another student or source during a test is cheating.	17	42	113	617	8
It is cheating to obtain questions or solutions for a test before taking it without having permission from your professor.	50	71	153	510	13
Not citing materials or ideas from other sources in your work is plagiarism.	26	71	192	498	10
It is ok to collaborate with other students on academic assignments without having permission from your professor.	55	154	208	369	11
Submitting false information in order to get an extension on an assignment or to take a quiz/test later is considered "misrepresenting facts" (eg., a false doctor's note).	22	65	185	518	7

Scores on the AIVS and AIBS were also calculated by demographic characteristics. The following charts compare the overall scores of students with the demographic categories of classification, gender, age, and national origin for both the values scale and behavior scale. In addition, and
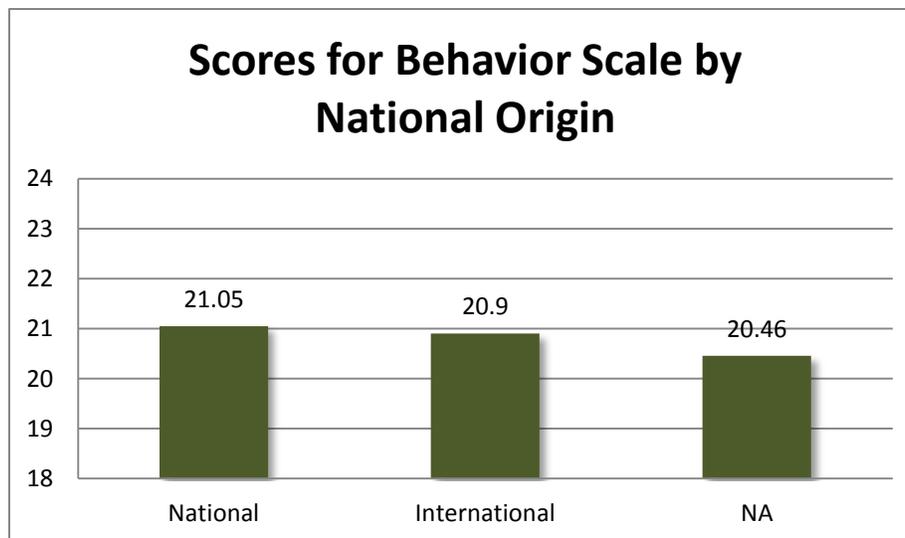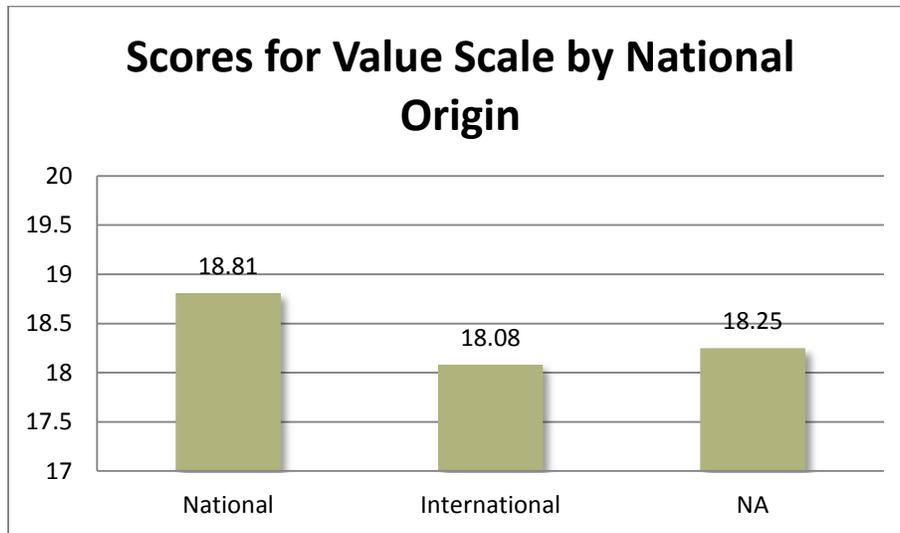
to ascertain that the differences between the groups were significant, a one-way ANOVA was conducted.

A significant difference in scores was found by gender for the AIVS and the AIBS. Female students scored higher than male students in each of the two subscales. suggesting that female students a higher regard for academic integrity values and behaviors. Also, a difference in scores was found when considering scores by national origin of the student. The analysis indicated that students of national origin (i.e., American students) scored significantly higher than students of international origin. Yet, no differences in scores for the AIBS were evident between these two groups. Lastly, no differences were found in scores for either subscale when considering student classification. Differences in scores were not examined by student age or by student major.

The following graphs show the average score by each category included in the analysis.

Scores for Value Scale by Gender

	Female	Male	NA
Score	18.91	18.24	17.83

Scores for Behavior Scale by Gender

	Female	Male	NA
Score	21.43	20.09	20.05

Scores for Value Scale by Classification

Classification	Score
Freshman	18.79
Sophomore	18.5
Junior	18.4
Senior	18.91
Graduate	18.28
N/A	17.59

Scores for Behavior Scale by Classification

Classification	Score
Freshman	21.15
Sophomore	20.5
Junior	21.6
Senior	20.86
Graduate	21.15
NA	19.85

Scores for Value Scale by National Origin

Scores for Behavior Scale by National Origin


Qualitative Analysis

In addition to measuring student perceptions of values and behaviors associated with academic integrity, the TTU Academic Integrity Survey included three questions for which students provided brief narrative responses.

1. Would you report another student if you knew he/she was cheating?

The majority of students, 507(64%), indicated that they would report a fellow student for academic integrity violations. A total of 236 (29%) students indicated that they would not report a fellow student who they knew was cheating. Of the 797 participating students, 55 students refrained from answering this question.
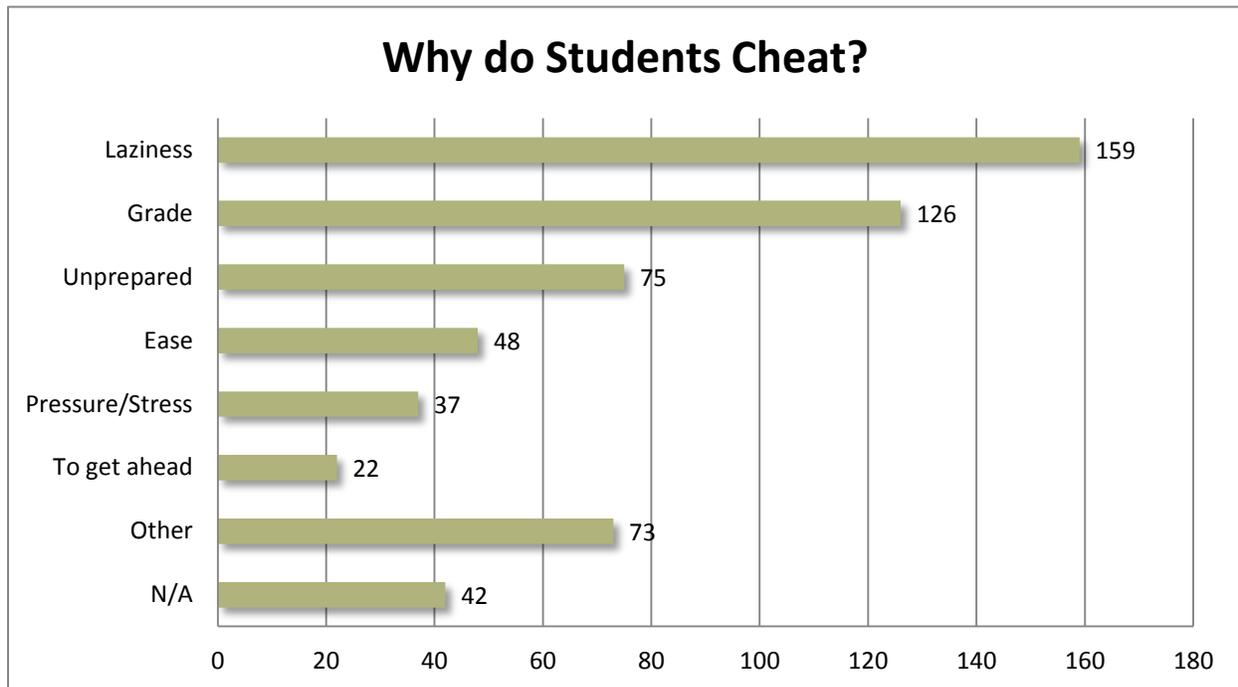
2. If yes, why? If not, why?

Of the students who express their willingness to report a fellow student for academic misconduct, 23% indicated that they would do so because "it is the right thing to do". Statements often reflected moral values instilled by parents, religious beliefs, or an intrinsic need to adhere to ethical behaviors such as "because it is ethical", "I was educated to do the right thing", "I strive for honor". Approximately 20% expressed that they would report a fellow student due to the unfair advantage gained by those who cheat. The most frequent statements suggested echoed the following: "it is unfair that I study hard and others get to cut corners". A few students admitted that they would be willing to report a student with whom they were not friends. For those students that indicated that they would not report peers engaged in academic misconduct, the most frequently cited reason was their unwillingness to get involved. This was often stated as "none of my business".
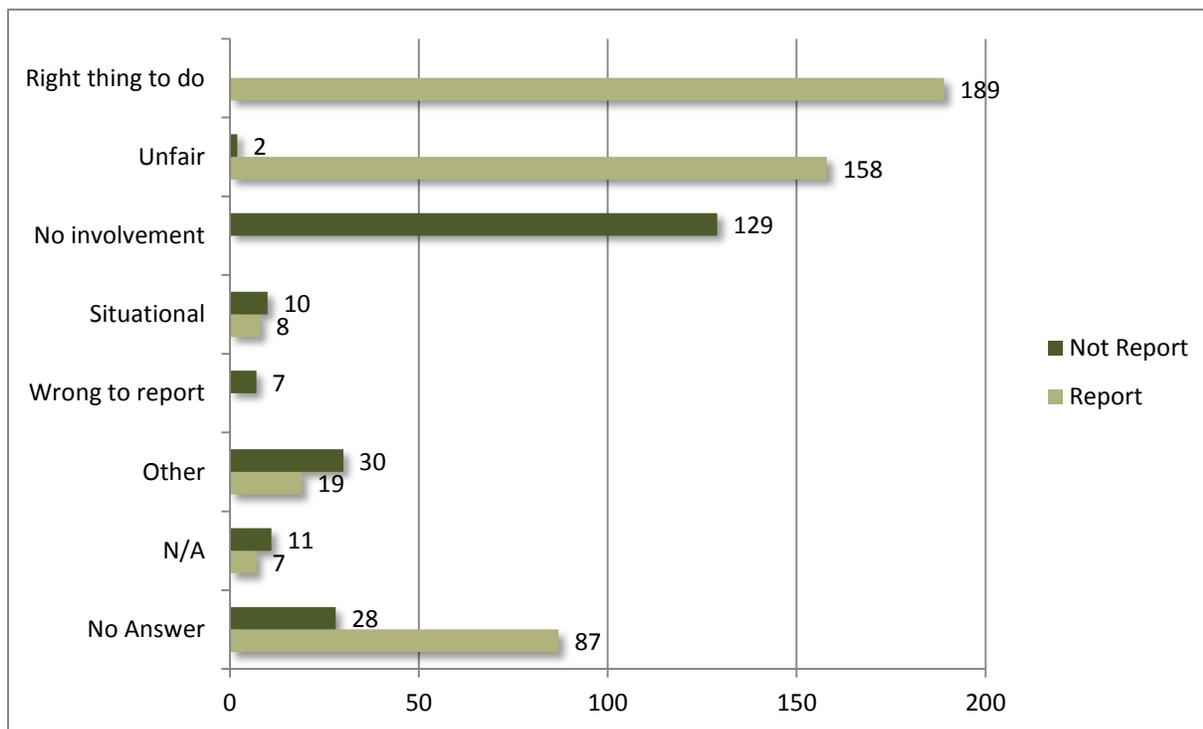
3: Why do students cheat?

The final question on the TTU Academic Integrity Survey asked students to express their ideas on why they thought students cheat. The most commonly cited reason expressed by students was that those who cheat are lazy (20%), are concerned about their grade (15%), or have not adequately prepared to take an exam or turn in an assignment. The following chart summarizes the themes emerging from this question, and indicates the frequency in which it appeared.

Why do Students Cheat?

Category	Value
Laziness	159
Grade	126
Unprepared	75
Ease	48
Pressure/Stress	37
To get ahead	22
Other	73
N/A	42

Conclusion

The 2013 TTU Academic Integrity survey included a fairly representative sample of the TTU student population with a few minor exceptions. The overall scores for the AIVS was relatively high (92%) yet the scores for the AIBS were only moderately high (69%). As anticipated, and supported by extensive literature, female students had higher scores than male students in each of the two Academic Integrity subscales. Students of international origin were found to score lower than students of national origin in the AIBS. One should be cautious with these findings as it has been noted that language barriers may influence an international student's interpretation of statements within a survey. It is interesting to note that there were no differences in scores in neither the AIVS nor the AIBS by student classification. Traditionally it has been postulated that younger students in the earlier classifications would have a lower regard for values and behaviors associated to academic integrity as a carryover from lax cultures of academic integrity in high school. According to the present assessment that is not the case at TTU. Also, it is encouraging to learn that students at TTU are willing to report peers who engage in academic misconduct and, that this willingness is motivated by a need to do the right thing.

The findings from the TTU Academic Integrity survey elucidate the general state of TTU's student academic integrity culture. The findings should serve to develop and implement new initiatives that will further enhance the climate of academic integrity on our campus and to guide students on a perpetual quest to "Strive for Honor".

Appendix A: The Survey

Section I.

Decide how important you consider the following ethical behaviors related to academic integrity. Circle one of the options ranging from 1(not at all important) through 4 (very important).				
	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important
Academic Integrity means that you are accountable for your own work.	1	2	3	4
Making a personal decision to adhere to the standards of ethical behavior	1	2	3	4
Ethical behavior and independent thought are important for achieving academic success.	1	2	3	4
Trust and respect among students, faculty, and staff are essential components of education.	1	2	3	4
Academic Integrity is the foundation of professional and educational careers.	1	2	3	4
Decide how bad you consider each of the following statements. Circle one of the options ranging from 1, not very bad, through 4, very bad.				
	Not at all bad	Somewhat bad	Bad	Very bad
Don't worry about plagiarism if you use the web; things from the web do not need to be cited.	1	2	3	4
Copying from another student or source during a test.	1	2	3	4
Obtaining questions or solutions for a test before taking it.	1	2	3	4
Not citing materials or ideas from other sources in your work is plagiarism.	1	2	3	4
Collaborating with other students on academic assignments without having permission from your professor.	1	2	3	4
Submitting false information in order to get an extension on an assignment or to take a quiz/test.	1	2	3	4

Section II.

Qualitative question

Would you report another student if you knew he/she was cheating?

Yes	No

If yes, why

If no, why not?