

Consequences for Academic Dishonesty: Student Perceptions

Justin Louder Ed.D.
Assistant Vice Provost
justin.louder@ttu.edu

Marcelo Schmidt, Ph.D.(c)
Research Assistant
marcelo.schmidt@ttu.edu

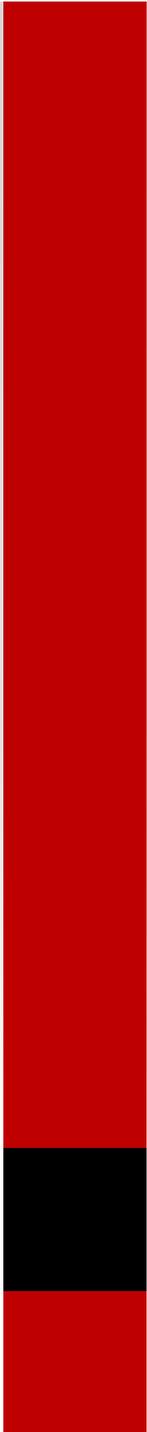
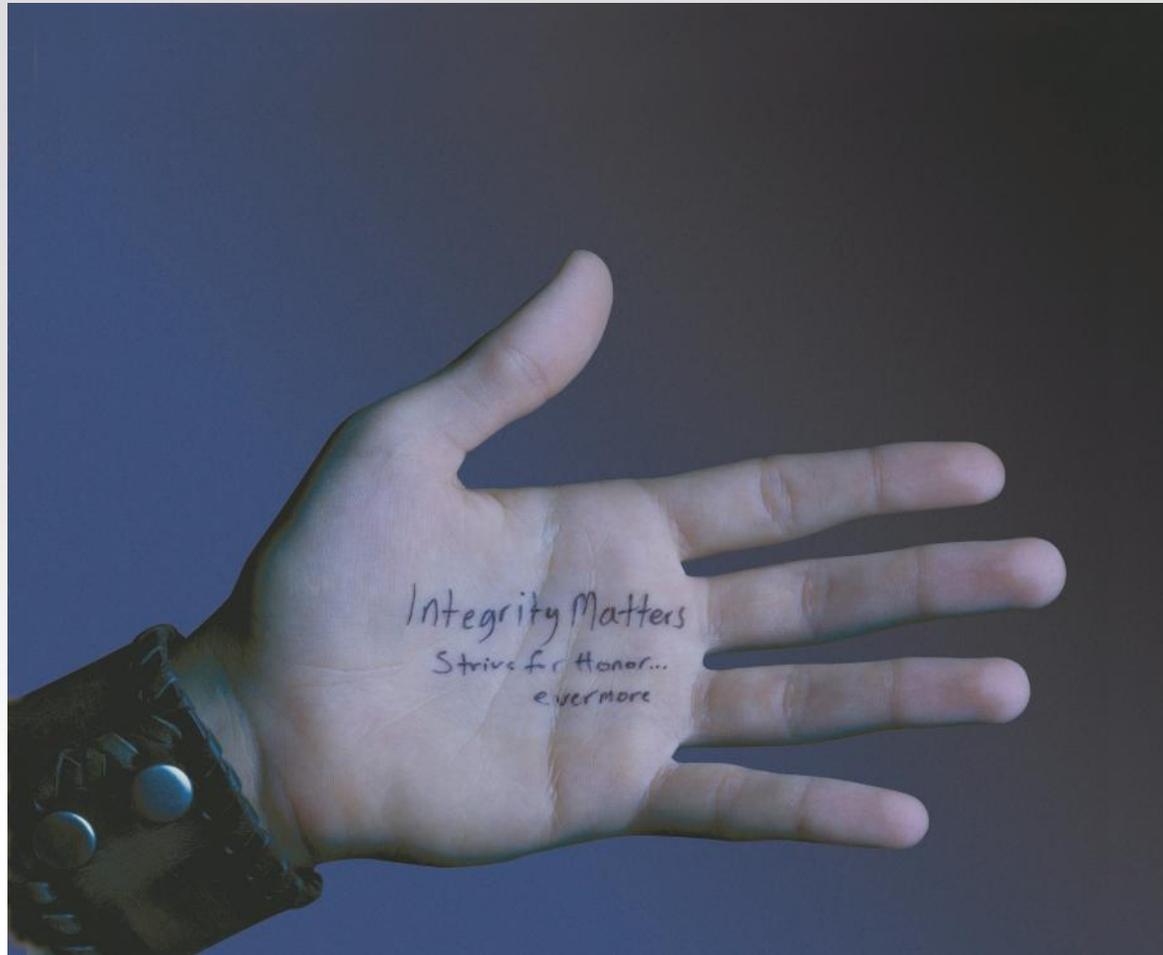


TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Ethics Center™

Academic Integrity

**Excellence
In Every
Red Raider**

**Give Credit
to Where
Credit is
Due**



Ethics Initiatives on Campus

- 2005-2010: QEP – SACS Accreditation

“Do the Right Thing:
A Campus Conversation on Ethics”

- Three Themes
 - Ethical Institution
 - Ethics in the Curriculum
 - Academic Integrity

Texas Tech's Mission

- As a public research university, Texas Tech advances knowledge through innovative and creative teaching, research, and scholarship. The university is dedicated to student success by preparing learners to be **ethical leaders** for a diverse and globally competitive workforce. The university is committed to enhancing the cultural and economic development of the state, nation, and world.
- Approved by the Texas Tech University Board of Regents on May 14, 2010

Texas Tech's Core Values

- Texas Tech University is committed to the values of **mutual respect; cooperation and communication; creativity and innovation; community service and leadership; pursuit of excellence; public accountability; and diversity.**

Introduction

- Academic dishonesty is a pervasive problem.
- Who?
 - Up to 90% of a schools student population
 - Male tendency
 - Young students in early academic classifications
- Why?
 - Personal factors
 - Contextual influences
- How?
 - Cheat sheets → Plagiarism → Collusion
 - On exams → On papers

When Prevention Fails

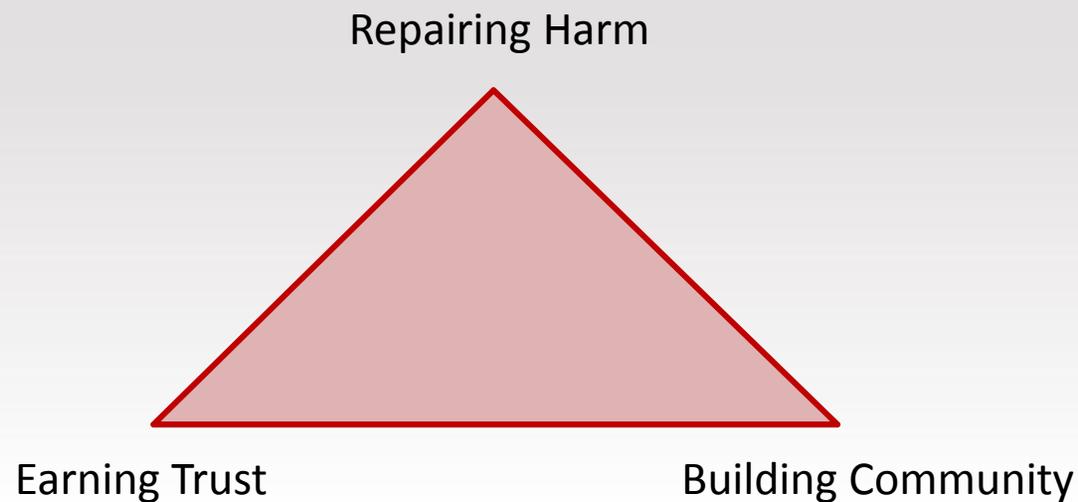
- Punishment
 - A traditional method employed
 - Severity of punishment moderates deterrence
 - Fear of punishment acts as a deterrent

However

- Described as archaic, legalistic and adversarial

Restorative Justice

- A contemporary approach to dealing with misconduct
 - Fosters communication between affected parties
 - Provides education about the consequences of improper conduct



Honor Code Schools

- Purportedly, enjoy a culture of:
 - Trust, honesty, fairness, responsibility, respect, courage, and empathy.
 - Shared responsibility (student and faculty)
 - Students assist in monitoring AI and sanctioning offenders

Honor Code Shortcomings

- Students unwilling to take on responsibility as monitors.
- Few students have expressed a desire for increased roles in policing AI.
- Students don't perceive grade penalties as greater deterrents to dishonest conduct than honor codes.

Our Study

- A conversion mixed design
- Independent analysis and merging to derive conclusions
- Question:
 - “In the past, students have said that our Texas Tech should have more severe consequences for academic dishonesty. If you agree, what specific consequences would you suggest?”

Participants

	Total		Respondents to Qual question	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Demographics				
<i>Age</i>	21.58			
<i>Gender</i>				
Male	626	59.7	180	38.0
Female	379	36.1	294	62.0
Not reported	44	4.2		
<i>Classification</i>				
Freshman	180	17.2	96	20.0
Sophomore	190	18.1	95	19.8
Junior	203	19.4	102	21.3
Senior	221	21.1	100	20.9
Graduate	218	20.8	86	18.0
Not reported	37	3.5		
<i>Total</i>	1049		486	46.3

Categories

- Moderate consequences (37%)
 - Letter grade F in exam (15%)
 - Letter grade F in course (15%)
 - Probation (10%)
- Severe consequences (60%)
 - Suspension (25%)
 - Expulsion (36%)
- Education for remediation (4%)

Qualitative Responses

- Moderate Consequences
 - “Academic dishonesty should be treated with automatic failure of course, as a first punishment”
- Severe Consequences
 - “Yes, if someone is dishonest or cheating they should be suspended”
 - “Yes, it is not fair that dedicated students do everything and others take the easy way out. Severe consequences such as being expelled”
- Education
 - “More than severe punishments, students should be first explained about the consequences of dishonesty”
 - “We should be focused less on punishment and more on encouraging students not to cheat. Teach more about how not to plagiarize”

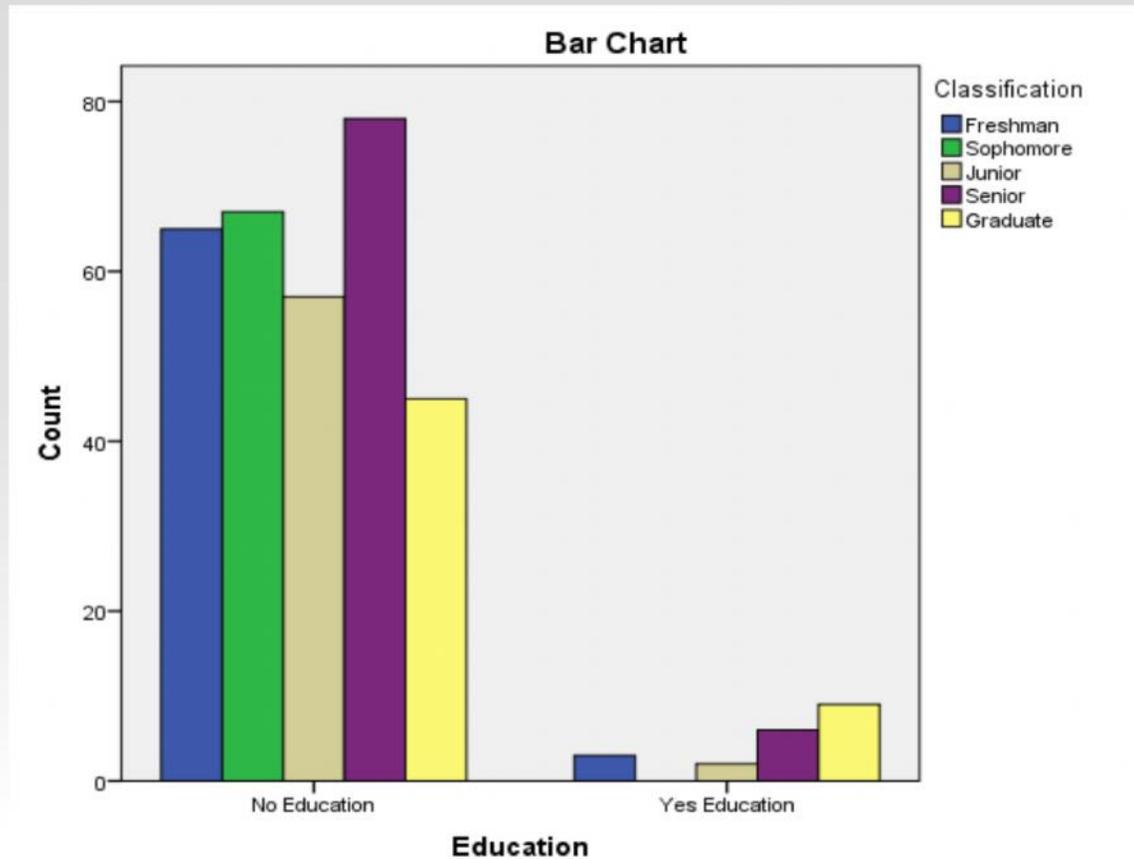
Agree or Disagree with need for more sever punishment?

- Junior level students were more likely to disagree (34%, ASR= 3.9).
 - Senior level students were more likely to agree (91%, ASR= 3.1).
- $\chi^2 = 19.66, p < .001, \phi_c = .218$

Severity of punishment and student demographics

- No statistically significant associations were identified by gender or by classification.

Education for Remediation



- $\chi^2 = 16.32, p < .01, \phi_c = .222$

Discussion

- Student perceptions of punishment for academic misconduct represents a gap in the literature.
- A larger percentage (60%) of students willing to endorse severe punishment.
 - This may reflect their acknowledgement of the inappropriateness of academic misconduct.
 - Punishment may be ingrained in the mindset of the contemporary student.
- Interesting not to find gender-related associations.
- Graduate students and education
 - Maturity?
 - Because of their role at the university? (Teaching assistant)

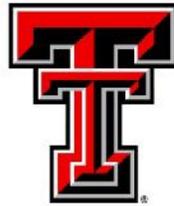
Education and Restorative Justice

- Education and Restorative justice share common goals.
- Contemporary approach to dealing with misconduct.
- Punishment appears to be engrained in the contemporary student's mindset.
- Is restorative justice feasible at the university? And will it yield the expected results?

Considerations

- Further study of Restorative Justice approaches
 - Effectiveness
 - Implementation
- Study limitations

Strive *for* Honor!



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