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ACADEMIC
INTEGRITY
IS BUILT
THROUGH A
CULTURE OF
TRUST

Co-creating an effective honor code with your class

Academic integrity has been a hot topic on our campus and across the nation during the move to remote teaching. Although it is hard to say whether cheating has increased during this unique time, it is true that [many faculty are using alternative assessments](#) to the ones traditionally used in their on ground classrooms. One option to help remind students of the culture of trust and community created in your on ground classroom is to co-create an honor code. In collaboration with a colleague at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison), we crafted a sample announcement to introduce the honor code activity to students. The sample honor code provided is modeled after an option in a [manuscript by Gurung and colleagues](#). That honor code was chosen because of its language centered on community, but feel free to craft one as a starting point that fits your class. The honor code activity can prime a discussion about academic integrity in your course. The co-created honor code can be used as the first question on your final assessment or however you and your students see fit.

Suggested statement for an announcement to students about the honor code activity: Because of the rapid shift to remote instruction, it's important to talk about making sure that your studying, hard work, and mindful effort that will go into our final exam will be respected and rewarded. I'll post the following statement into our discussion forum in Canvas; I'd like to hear your thoughts about how you are studying for the exam, as well as what you would like all of your classmates to do in order to ensure everyone has the same opportunity to show your skills.

Honor Code: I acknowledge that the University is an academic community devoted to the pursuit of knowledge. Fundamental to this pursuit is academic

integrity. In joining the University community I accept the [University's Statement of Academic Integrity](#) and pledge to uphold the principles embodied in it. I will conduct myself in accordance with ideals of truth and honesty and I will oppose actions which would violate these ideals.

Dr. Thomas Tobin (UW-Madison) shares insight into what makes an honor code effective:

1. **Community expectations:** If the honor code is co-created by students there will be a collective investment in the process, and community peer pressure to comply.
2. **Reinforcement:** Ideally the honor code is created at the beginning of the term and revisited many times throughout the semester.
3. **Temporal immediacy:** The honor code should appear when students might feel the greatest pressure to act otherwise, either as question 1 on an exam or in the instructions for submitted work.

Once again honor codes are only effective if they are built on a culture of trust and community. Many of us are used to building that trust in the physical classroom but how do you continue to build that trust online? Please read our upcoming newsletters for tips on how to build trust in an online environment.