

## Module 1 – Academic Integrity

- 1) Plagiarism involves two elements:
  1. Using someone else’s ideas or expression of the ideas (e.g. words), and
  2. Representing the ideas as your own original ideas or failing to attribute the ideas to their proper source using conventional writing styles.
  - (a) True
  - (b) False
  - (c) Either one is sufficient to constitute plagiarism.
  - (d) Neither one is essential
  - (e) Only the first element is needed to constitute plagiarism.
  
- 2) If you are writing a document for any course at the University of Toronto, for professional purposes, or for any type of publication, and you use an idea taken from any source, then to avoid plagiarism you must have in your document:
  - (a) An in-text citation, which identifies that the idea has been taken from another source.
  - (b) A reference at the end of the document that identifies the source of the idea.
  - (c) A reference that is complete, accurate, and truthful (not concocted).
  - (d) Either (a), (b) or (c)
  - (e) All of (a), (b) and (c)
  
- 3) Why is it essential for engineers to be ethical?
  - (a) If you are not ethical, you will go to jail
  - (b) The public has bestowed upon engineers the right to self-governance and responsibility over public safety, so they must be able to trust engineers to do the right thing
  - (c) The disciplinary committees have the power to revoke the license of a member who behaves unethically
  - (d) It is illegal to offer Engineering services without a license
  - (e) (b), (c) and (d) only
  - (f) (a), (b), (c) and (d)
  
- 4) Why is it important for students at U of T to have high standards of ethics?
  - (a) To make more money after graduation
  - (b) The reputation of the University and therefore all the graduates depends on it
  - (c) To avoid potential disciplinary actions
  - (d) Because it is the “right thing to do”
  - (e) (b) and (c)
  - (f) (b), (c) and (d)

- 5) Chris Spence was forced to resign from his position as the Director of the Toronto District School Board because of:
- (a) Fraud
  - (b) Misrepresentation
  - (c) Plagiarism
  - (d) Poor performance
  - (e) Vexatious conduct
  - (f) Harassment
- 6) Chris Spence was a graduate of what school and worked at what job?
- (a) University of Waterloo and the Director of the Toronto District School Board
  - (b) University of Toronto and the Dean of Engineering
  - (c) University of Western Ontario and the Chair of the Civil Engineering Department
  - (d) University of Toronto and the Director of the Toronto District School Board
  - (e) University of Western Ontario and the Director of the Toronto District School Board
  - (f) University of Ottawa and Dean of the Faculty of Education
- 7) The University has the right to administer discipline against any action that:
- (a) Jeopardizes the good order and proper functioning of the academic and non-academic programs and activities of the University or its divisions,
  - (b) Endangers the health, safety, rights or property of its members or visitors,
  - (c) Adversely affects the property of the University or bodies related to it
  - (d) Are illegal
  - (e) (a), (b) and (c)
  - (f) (a), (b), (c) and (d)
- 8) It is not considered plagiarism if you submit the same piece of work for credit in more than one course, as long as you were the sole author.
- (a) True
  - (b) False
- 9) It is not considered plagiarism if you submit the same piece of work for credit in more than one course
- (a) True
  - (b) False
- 10) You see a classmate cheating on an exam, but you do not report it to the professor. Are you guilty of an academic offense?
- (a) Yes
  - (b) No

- 11) Sanctions imposed in response to an academic or non-academic offense can include
- (a) A phone call to the student's parents or legal guardian to discuss the situation.
  - (b) A monetary fine.
  - (c) A mark of zero on an assignment, part of a course mark, or all of a course mark.
  - (d) A record of the sanction on the student's transcript.
  - (e) (b), (c), and (d)
  - (f) None of the above
- 12) You are writing a multiple choice exam, and it is much longer and harder than you expected. You are worried that you will not pass. Sitting beside you is another student that you know is one of the smartest in the class. You notice that she has already filled in the answers to the next three questions you are about to answer, and you copy her answers to your paper. Just then, a Proctor taps you on the shoulder. Disciplinary actions could include:
- (a) A grade of zero on the test
  - (b) A requirement to re-write the test
  - (c) A suspension from enrolment for up to one year
  - (d) A written reprimand on your academic transcript
  - (e) Other options decided by the University on a case-by case basis
  - (f) Any of the above
- 13) Academic Offenses include:
- (a) Falsifying documents or fabricating information
  - (b) Using unauthorized aids or pretending to be another person
  - (c) Plagiarism or submitting work that has been submitted before
  - (d) Helping or allowing someone else to commit an offense
  - (e) (a), (b) and (c)
  - (f) (a), (b), (c) and (d)
- 14) Breaches of the ethical standard includes
- (a) Actions that you knew were wrong at the time
  - (b) Actions that you should have known were wrong at the time
  - (c) Anything that is expressly forbidden by law
  - (d) Wrong actions by others that you knew about, but did not report
  - (e) All of the above
  - (f) a and d only
- 15) One morning you bring two iClickers with you to an APS111 lecture. One belongs to you, and one belongs to your friend who is not attending lecture that day. In this course, APS111, correctly answering an iClicker question during lecture is worth a small fraction of the final mark in the course. When

the professor puts an iClicker question up on the screen, you answer using both iClickers. This is an academic offense because:

- (a) You are representing as your own, the work of someone else.
- (b) You are in possession of an unauthorized aid which you are using to obtain unauthorized assistance.
- (c) You are helping someone else (your friend) commit an academic offense.
- (d) You are impersonating another person; that is you are playing the role of your friend during the lecture for the purpose of helping him/her gain academic advantage, which is fraud.
- (e) a and b
- (f) c and d

16) Continuing on from the scenario described in the previous question concerning the misuse of an iClicker: The Professor observes you using two iClickers in the lecture and calls you in for a meeting regarding this alleged academic offense. Your best course of action is:

- (a) Refuse to meet with the Professor.
- (b) Meet with the Professor, but deny any wrongdoing.
- (c) Meet with the Professor, and plead ignorance. Say you were not aware of the rules, or what constitutes “academic misconduct” and, therefore, should not be held accountable.
- (d) Meet with the Professor, and tell him/her truthfully exactly what happened. Then apologize.
- (e) Any of these options would be equally appropriate under the

17) Unacceptable behaviour for any member of the University community includes:

- (a) Seeking credit or other advantages by fraud or misrepresentation
- (b) Seeking to disadvantage others by disruptive behaviour
- (c) Any dishonesty or unfairness in dealing with the work or record of a student
- (d) Discussing assignments with other students or checking each other’s work
- (e) (b), (c) and (d)
- (f) (a), (b) and (c)

18) Under the University of Toronto Code of Student Conduct, an offender includes:

- (a) The person who commits the offence
- (b) Anyone who aids or assists the primary offender by doing or not doing something
- (c) Anyone who conspires with the offender or gives them help or advice

- (d) Potentially staff, students, faculty or administrators
- (e) (a), (c) and (d) only
- (f) (a), (b), (c) and (d)

19) After finishing a mechanics lab, you lost the USB key containing all of the data you had gathered. You understand the lab extremely well, and you know the results you should see. Moreover, you borrowed and analyzed a friend's data, verified that the data is good, and confirmed that it agrees with your understanding. Assuming you have attempted to contact the lab instructor but have not heard from her, which of the following actions is ethical?

- (a) Repeat the lab and re-collect the data to use in your analysis
- (b) Construct your own data, with some noise added, to demonstrate your understanding of both the system and noise models. Use this data for your analysis.
- (c) Use your friend's data but change a few values slightly, perform your own analysis, and write up your own results
- (d) Do not perform the data analysis as you have no data – instead, mention that the data was misplaced, and discuss what you would expect the data to look like and the results you would have expected to see – even if this means you are likely to get a low mark
- (e) All of the above, as long as you clearly indicate whether the data was constructed or borrowed to avoid plagiarism
- (f) (a) or (d), as long as you include sufficient information in your documentation to justify your choice

## **Case Studies:**

### **Academic Case Study #1**

Ryan and a friend (Sam) are working on a computer program for several hours one evening, and the final program is due at midnight. It is worth 7% of their final grade. They have had an extensive discussion of a sorting algorithm and debated the efficiency of various methods for the current application. Although they have talked in some detail, each of them has written their own code.

Ryan feels that he has just about sorted it out, when another friend, (Tarek) sends a text for help with the sorting algorithm at 10:45 p.m. Ryan doesn't have time to explain, and instead, emails Tarek with 15 lines of his code. In the body of the email, Ryan tells Tarek to just look at the code for information, since there is no time left to talk him through it. Ryan and Sam submit their programs, which have similar logical structure, but completely different details, since they wrote the codes independently.

One week later, Ryan and Tarek are summoned to the Professor's office. Before the meeting Tarek looks extremely uncomfortable, and once in the meeting, Ryan discovers, to his horror, that Tarek copied 10 of the 15 lines and both Ryan and Tarek are accused of plagiarism. Tarek immediately confesses that he didn't really understand the code and basically copied it, changing variable names to obscure the copying. He is surprised that the automatic code comparison routine picked up the similarity, but the Professor explains that the checker compares line structure, character spacing and other things that leave no doubt that the programs have been copied.

Ryan protests his innocence, but the Professor tells them both that she cannot do anything about this and is obliged to report it to the Chair of First Year. They are told they will be contacted by the Chair's office to set up an appointment.

A week later, Ryan and Tarek each get an email asking them to appear before the Chair of First Year. They are informed that:

- they have been accused of plagiarism, and must meet with the Chair
- the meeting will be formal, and minutes will be taken
- they may bring a friend, family member or lawyer if they wish,
- they must read the University's Code of Academic Conduct before they appear. Ryan sees the word "lawyer" and can't believe his bad luck and Tarek's idiocy. He has never cheated before in his life. Tarek feels guilty and apologizes profusely but Ryan who refuses to talk to him. The Chair of First Year is at a conference, so it takes two weeks before the meeting is set up,

and in the meantime, both Ryan and Tarek have trouble sleeping. Ryan fails a midterm in another course because of the stress.

Questions:

- Is Ryan guilty of an academic offense?
- Is Sam guilty of an academic offense?
- Is Tarek guilty of an academic offense?
- What penalties could be assigned for these offenses?
- What would happen if this was a second or third offence for Ryan or Tarek?
  - What would happen if Ryan or Tarek refuse to admit to the offense when they meet with the Chair?

### **Academic Case Study #2**

Lee and Lynn have worked together since first year. They have been on the same design teams and have been lab partners. They like to write up their lab reports together. They work very hard on these reports and are very proud of their work. They realize that what they hand in is often the same, but they figure it does not matter because it was the same lab, even though the instructions explicitly state that lab reports must be written independently.

Recently, Lee and Lynn's TA overheard a student in the hallway boasting about how he had not written up a single lab report all year, but simply hands in the same lab report as his lab partner. Concerned, the TA carefully re-examined the lab reports she had just graded. She discovered that Lee and Lynn had many identical passages, including identical grammar mistakes. Now, she must inform her department that Lee and Lynn have to be brought up on charges of Academic Misconduct. This will be very upsetting to Lee and Lynn, who are otherwise top students.

Questions

- Do you think that Lee and Lynn have really done anything wrong?
- What would you say the problem of work sharing is from the university's perspective?
  - Are the differences between the ways students understand and express their understanding of course material important? Why or why not?
- What are some strategies that Lee and Lynn could use to still work

together but avoid plagiarizing one another?

### **Academic Case Study #3**

Andy and Bob were friends in high school and both decided to go to UofT Engineering. Andy did better than Bob in his writing assignments for his first year design course, and Bob occasionally would ask Andy for help with his writing. At first Andy took the time to work with Bob on writing, but as the semester went on Andy had less and less time to help. Bob started to get very anxious. He had relied on Andy's help and as the assignments were getting more difficult he was having a harder and harder time completing them. For the last major assignment in the semester Bob didn't know what to do. He was overwhelmed with work. He tried to work on the assignment, but he just couldn't figure out what to write.

He went to the computer lab to work on the assignment the night before it was due and he saw Andy there. Andy was putting the finishing touches on his assignment. Bob begged Andy to "just let me look at what you wrote for a minute" so he could get an idea of where to begin on this assignment. Andy, feeling sorry for his friend, said "sure". He let Bob look at his work while he took a quick break.

A couple weeks later both Andy and Bob are accused of plagiarism because their assignments share several similar ideas and some similar phrasing.

#### Questions

- Is Andy guilty of plagiarism? And if so, why?
- How should Andy have handled this situation differently?
- What could Bob have done differently to avoid this situation?
- What are the possible penalties that Bob and Andy may incur?

### **Losing control**

Daniel is in the second year of Mechanical Engineering. One of her friends, Emily, is in first year. Emily was having difficulty with an MSE101 lab report. She asked Daniel if she can borrow the lab report that Daniel wrote up last year for MSE101. Emily absolutely promises that she will not copy anything from Daniel's report, she just wants to get an idea of what to write. Daniel decides that she can trust her friend and gives Emily the report.

Emily is working on her MSE101 report when she gets a text message from her friend Frida asking for help on the MSE101 report. Emily doesn't have time to help Frida, so she sends Frida Daniel's report along with a warning not to copy anything in the report. Soon Frida has passed Daniel's report along to 8 or 9 more friends.

As the TA is grading the lab reports they notice similarities between many of the reports in the class, and the source is identified as Daniel's report submitted the previous year.

- Is Daniel guilty of an academic offense? And if so, why?
- How should Daniel have handled this situation differently?
- Are Emily and Frida guilty of an academic offense?
- What are the possible penalties that these students may incur?

## **Word for word 2**

You have been invited by the Vice-Dean for Undergraduate Studies to serve on a committee reviewing current policies on Academic Misconduct. The day after your first meeting, a friend of yours tells you that her instructor told her she committed plagiarism for the following passage she wrote, using material from an article she correctly identified in the reference section of her document. The quote below is exactly as it appeared in the document.

“Although nanofiber web has many potential applications, such as wound dressing, tissue engineering scaffolds, protective clothing and filtration, due to its large specific area, very small pore size, high porosity and so forth, it was previously impossible to apply the web in products such as outdoor wear because mass production had been unsuccessful. Recently, many companies and institutes have tried to improve the mass production system. Some companies have succeeded in developing an electrospinning mass production system and have started to produce non-woven fabric consisting of 100% nanofiber, with a production width of more than 1.5 meters [1].”

In the References Cited, your friend has listed:

[1] L. Sumin, D. Kimura, A. Yokoyama, KH. Lee, J. C. Park and I. Kim. “The Effects of Laundering on the Mechanical Properties of Mass-produced Nanofiber Web for Use in Wear” *Textile Research Journal* Vol 79, no. 12. pp. 1085–1090, 2009

Your friend feels that she is being treated unfairly; you explained the problem to her, but you feel that there is something wrong with the case. You go and talk to the vice-dean as well as another member of the committee who is expert on matters of intellectual property. As a result, you find out the problem and clear your friend of the misconduct.

- 1) What was the problem the instructor thought the passage had?
- 2) What was the instructor's error?
- 3) How could such a mistake be avoided in the future, while following best practices for engineering writing?

**Review Questions:**

- 1) Why does the University of Toronto have a Code of Behaviour?
- 2) What is the significance of the term “knew or ought to have known”?
- 3) What is Plagiarism?
- 4) Explain the ethical dilemma of passing someone else’s thoughts as your own?