

Preventing Cheating in Exams

On Monday 26 October 2015, Rebecca Friesen, Giselle Lemay, Eugene Li, Valerie Lloyd, Deborah Moniuk, Heidi Mede, Linda Scratchley, Erin Skinner and Fulton Tom met to discuss techniques to prevent and to detect cheating in exams.

The following techniques were suggested in the session.

- Inform students of Langara College's Academic Conduct policy (eg in the course outline, prior to the exam and/or throughout the semester).
- Motivate students to be honest and to do their best.
- Have students sign an honour code at the beginning of the exam.
- Put up a notice during the exam asking students to inform the instructor if they observe cheating.
- Have students place unnecessary items (eg books, electronic devices, pencil cases) to the sides of the classroom.
- Require students to cover up their answers on the exam and on scantron sheets.
- Require students to answer multiple choice questions on scantron sheets only and not on the exams.
- Require students to fill in their scantron sheets at the end of the exam.
- Separate students by leaving an empty seat between students.
- Have students sit in preassigned seats to separate students that studied together or know each other.
- Prohibit students that studied together or know each other from sitting together.
- Use physical dividers to prevent students from looking at others' exams.
- Prohibit communication between students during the exam.
- Position students such that the instructor can easily walk through the classroom (eg by leaving rows in large classrooms empty) to detect the use of unauthorized resources.
- Record the seating position of each student in case cheating is suspected after the exam is graded.
- Give multiple versions of the exam that cannot be easily distinguished by students.
- Require students to expose their ears by removing hoods and toques to deter the use of audio devices.
- Require hats with brims be removed or be worn backwards to detect wandering eyes.
- Have students present photo identification during the exam or when submitting their exams.
- Have students sign in to deter students from claiming they were present at the exam when they were not.
- Have additional invigilators to provide more eyes on students.
- Prohibit students that leave the classroom to use the washroom from resuming the exam.
- Have an additional invigilator accompany a student to the washroom.
- Require students with medical conditions that may necessitate the use of the washroom during the exam to notify the instructor prior to the exam.
- Ensure the exam reflects the course content as students are more likely to cheat if they perceive the instructor or the exam as being unfair.
- Provide students with extra time by giving a shorter exam than the class time allows as students are more likely to cheat if they are stressed.
- Establish a tough policy for regrades to deter students from changing answers and resubmitting exams for regrading.
- Maintain copies of exams (eg by scanning exams using the mailroom photocopiers) to detect students that have altered answers when resubmitting exams for regrading.

Fulton suggested *The (Honest) Truth about Dishonesty* by Dan Ariely for understanding the influences of cheating. Valerie recommended working with Maggie Ross of Student Conduct & Judicial Affairs to deal with cheating.

The group also recognized that instructors need to strike a balance being vigilant in deterring cheating and being trustful of students.