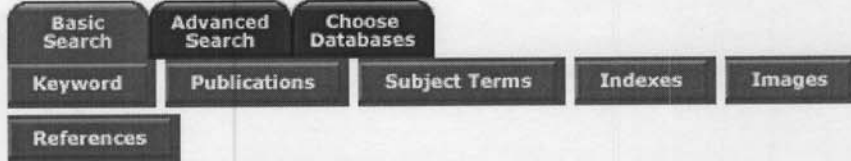




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Abstract: Discusses a statement written by Duke University's Center for *Academic Integrity* called the Fundamental Values of *Academic Integrity*. How the center hopes the statement will curb cheating on exams and plagiarism by *college* students; Percentages of students that have admitted to cheating and their attitudes about the severity of their crime.

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Section: THE FACULTY

COLLEGES URGED TO BETTER DEFINE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND TO STRESS ITS IMPORTANCE

Contents

WANT to stop students from cheating on exams and plagiarizing papers? Tell them about honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

**STARTING AT
SQUARE ONE**

month.

That advice may seem obvious, but the Center for **Academic Integrity** is making those points the key recommendations of a new statement called "The Fundamental Values of **Academic Integrity**." The center drafted the policy using a \$150,000 grant, and is sending copies to 4,000 **college** presidents this

The center, based at Duke University, is a consortium of 200 **colleges** and universities that was formed in 1992 to encourage campus conversations about **academic integrity**. Donald L. McCabe, a professor of organization management at Rutgers University at Newark and the center's founder, has conducted studies showing that student cheating is on the rise. (See "Toward a Culture of **Academic Integrity**," by Donald L. McCabe and Patrick Drinan, Page B7.) Recent surveys by Mr. McCabe and others have shown that students don't think cheating is a big deal and that professors are doing little to curb it. In a 1998 poll of 3,123 students listed in *Who's Who Among High School Students*, 80 per cent admitted to having cheated. More than half of those surveyed did not believe cheating was a serious violation.

STARTING AT SQUARE ONE

That's why the center figured it needed to start at square one. Says Sally Cole, the center's executive director: "We started out being more complicated and complex and discovered it really did reduce to basics." Before the center drew up the statement on **academic integrity**, its staff held about a dozen meetings around the country with students, faculty members, and administrators. The project was financed with a \$150,000 grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The statement begins by defining **academic integrity** and explaining why it is important. "Many institutions have neither defined **academic integrity** nor expressly committed to it," the statement reads. "Others explain **academic integrity** merely by listing behaviors that are prohibited rather than by identifying values and behaviors to be promoted."

The statement devotes a page to each of the five core values the center believes are key to encouraging **academic integrity**. For example, it notes that "honesty begins with oneself and extends to others," and it quotes an anonymous student: "Most of my professors give honest, truthful feedback in response to my assignments."

About "fairness," the statement explains: "All campus constituencies have a role in ensuring fairness, and a lapse by one member of the community does not excuse misconduct by another."

The statement stops short of concrete recommendations, other than to advise institutions to adopt formal policies outlining the kind of behavior they expect of students. Those policies, it says, should "go beyond repudiation of **academic** dishonesty and include discussions about the importance of **academic integrity** and its connection to broader ethical issues and concerns."

"I happen to believe," Mr. McCabe says, "that as so many issues have come to the fore--drug and alcohol abuse and sex harassment--what's happened is that **academic** honesty on a large number of campuses has been knocked off the agenda. My hope is we can get it back on. We're not advocating a single position here. There is no one-size-fits-ail."

The center is already following up on its statement by working with 12 **colleges** and universities to assess whether their current policies promote **academic integrity**.

"The goal is to make it easier for schools to look closely at the level of honesty of their students and how well their policies are formulated," says Ms. Cole.

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By Robin Wilson

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