
THE IMPACT OF PERCEIVED PEER BEHAVIOR, PROBABLE DETECTION AND PUNISHMENT SEVERITY ON STUDENT CHEATING BEHAVIOR

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A study was conducted among marketing students to assess perceptions of their own and others' plagiarism, likelihood of being caught, and appropriate sanctions for cheating. Students admitted to having plagiarized, though overwhelmingly they believed these activities were more common among classmates. Perceptions of peer behavior was positively related to cheating, while likelihood of being caught and punishment had a negative impact on cheating behavior involving paper writing; however, likelihood of being caught did not have an impact on cheating related to tests and homework. Prescriptions for marketing educators are provided addressing preventative policies/procedure, a culture of academic integrity, teaching techniques to reduce cheating, and sanctions that motivate students to be honest.

Key Words: cheating behavior, peer influence, cheating deterrents, plagiarism

Student plagiarism has become a major point of discussion and concern in higher education (Devlin 2006). A study conducted by the Center for Academic Integrity (McCabe 2005) revealed that 70% of college students have admitted to cheating, and that cheating is not confined to those students who are struggling academically, but includes even the highest achieving students (Koch 2000). Plagiarism and other forms of cheating have become a focus among marketing educators and administrators since students who plagiarize are more likely to cheat again (Nonis and Swift 1998) and behave unethically in the workforce (Sims 1993). While much has been documented concerning students' motivations for and participation in plagiaristic activities, the influence of third-person effect and the consequences of misperception of peer behavior have received little attention (Scanlon and Neumann 2002; Spake, Megehee, and Franke 2007). The purpose of this study is to assess student perceptions of others' cheating behavior and their views on the likelihood of detection and appropriate consequences for specific cheating activities. In addition, the influence of these constructs on self-reported

cheating behavior will be examined in support of social network theory and cost/benefit analysis. Finally, self-reported cheating behaviors will be explored to determine whether all types of cheating are viewed similarly or whether variant forms of cheating are influenced by these constructs differently.

The word *plagiarism* comes from the Latin *plagiarius* meaning "kidnapper" or "plunderer." In modern usage it refers to copying another person's work and presenting it as if it were one's own. Succinctly, it is intellectual theft. Though generally thought of in terms of copying term papers, articles, or material published in books, it can include actions such as copying homework or sharing answers on tests. All of these actions are examples of presenting written work that is not reflective of one's own abilities and/or efforts. The next section details empirical research on factors that contribute to student cheating.

Factors That Contribute to Student Cheating

Contributing factors to the rise in plagiarism are thought to include a lack of student understanding about what constitutes plagiarism (Hansen 2003), the view that plagiarism is a trivial matter (Koch 2000), intense pressure created by high-stakes tests (Koch 2000), the perception that cheating behavior is a part of our society both in and out of the education setting (ABCNews.com 2004), parental pressure to obtain scholarships and maintain certain grades to keep them (Kleiner and Lord 1999), ease of access to online cheating resources (Kleiner and Lord 1999), large college classes with little monitoring (Koch 2000), the lack of

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fear of getting caught (Kleiner and Lord 1999; Hansen 2003), time pressures (Hansen 2003), and the perception that cheating is necessary to keep up with or surpass class averages set by those who cheat, a particular concern if the instructor curves the grades (Ryan 1998). Although the causes of student cheating appear to be quite numerous, these causes have been previously grouped into categories (c.f. Crown and Spiller 1998) using Ford and Richardson's (1994) individual/situational factor typology for ethical decision making.

We provide an updated overview of qualitative and empirical research in this area within the past decade, as shown in Table 1. Similar to Crown and Spiller (1998) we report the study, size of the sample, method used, and major findings. The factors that influence student cheating, as shown in Table 1, can be grouped into student characteristics, attitudes/beliefs, behaviors, and external influences. It should be noted that the factors that increase cheating behavior can be both internal and external forces on the student, suggesting that, at least with respect to the external forces, marketing educators and academic institutions may be able to address these influences in order to reduce cheating behaviors.

Research Question and Hypotheses

While marketing educators desire to reduce all types of cheating behavior, students may not view all types of cheating to be equally wrong, or even consider a particular cheating behavior to be wrong or worthy of sanction. Further, inhibitors may not work equally well for all types of cheating behavior. The purpose of this research is to examine the influence of perceived peer cheating behavior, the likelihood of getting caught and the severity of punishment on different types of student plagiarism, and to determine whether these factors are influential across types of cheating behavior. Since students view cheating on a test as a more serious infraction than plagiarism in a written assignment (Overbey and Guiling 1999), it raises the question of whether previously studied antecedents of cheating behavior hold for all types of cheating. Therefore, we question whether the proposed hypotheses below will hold for different types of cheating behaviors. As such, we raise the following research question:

RQ 1: Do perceptions of classmates' cheating behavior, likelihood of being caught cheating, and severity of punishment have the same impact for all types of student cheating behaviors?

Two theories help to explain why students engage in cheating, the social network analysis component of contagion theory and cost/benefit analysis within economic theory.

Social Network Analysis

According to social contagion theory, attitudes and values are not formed in isolation, but are the result of the social influence of others (Erickson 1988). Social network analysis predicts the social contagion of unethical behavior as being due to cohesion and equivalence (Brass, Butterfield, and Skaggs 1988); that is, that individuals within groups that are similar are more likely to behave similarly. As a result, if students believe that others within their group are cheating, they are more likely to cheat as well. In fact, perceptions of peer behavior are thought to be a better predictor of self-reported unethical behavior than one's own beliefs (Zey-Ferrell et al. 1979).

Consistent with social network analysis and contagion theory, students are more likely to cheat in situations in which their peers cheat (McCabe and Trevino 1993, 1995, 1997; Underwood and Szabo 2003), and are less likely to cheat in cases where peers disapprove of the behavior (McCabe and Trevino 1997). Students are also likely to overestimate the degree to which others cheat (Chapman et al. 2004), believing that cheating behavior is widespread (Prenshaw, Straughan, and Albers-Miller 2001). Therefore, perceptions of classmates' cheating behavior should have a positive impact on a student's own cheating behavior. Based on this research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Perceptions of classmates' cheating behavior will have a positive impact on engaging in plagiarism.

Cost/Benefit Analysis

Economic theory suggests that "a person commits an offense if the expected utility to him exceeds the utility he could get by using his time and other resources at other activities" (Becker 1968, p. 176). Based on economic theory, students cheat because the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs. Applying economic theory to student cheating behavior suggests that students benefit by avoiding work, achieving higher grades, encountering less stress (Hutton 2006) and/or time savings. The obvious cost of cheating is punishment should the student be caught; however, additional costs of cheating include lack of knowledge needed later and/or guilt associated with cheating. While both the likelihood of getting caught and punishment severity impact the cost/benefit analysis, research indicates that, with respect to criminal behavior, likelihood of punishment is a greater deterrent than punishment severity (Leung 1995). As a result, economic theory suggests that both likelihood of getting caught and punishment severity should have a negative impact on a student's

Table 1
Empirical Studies Examining Student Cheating Behaviors: 1997 – 2007

<i>Variable Study (Year)</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Findings</i>
Student Characteristics Related to Cheating			
<i>Academic Performance</i>			
Smith, Davy and Easterling (2004)	Survey	742	Those with higher academic performance are less likely to cheat
<i>Age</i>			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Younger students are more likely to cheat
<i>Class Standing</i>			
Underwood and Szabo (2003)	Survey	291	Those with lower class standing are more likely to cheat than upper classmen
<i>Gender</i>			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Males more likely to cheat
Nonis and Swift (1998)	Survey	301	Males more likely to cheat
Pino and Smith (2003)	Survey	675	Males more likely to cheat
Smith, Davy and Easterling (2004)	Survey	742	Males more likely to cheat
Underwood and Szabo (2003)	Survey	278	Males more likely to cheat
<i>GPA</i>			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Those with lower GPAs are more likely to cheat
Pino and Smith (2003)	Survey	675	Those with lower GPAs are more likely to cheat
Attitudes/Beliefs Related to Cheating			
<i>Lack of Knowledge about Academic Dishonesty</i>			
Love and Simmons (1998)	Qualitative	6	Lack of knowledge about what constituted academic dishonesty increased cheating
<i>Rationalization</i>			
Nonis and Swift (1998)	Survey	301	Rationalization of cheating behavior increases cheating
Behaviors Related to Cheating			
<i>Absenteeism</i>			
Pino and Smith (2003)	Survey	675	Absenteeism increases cheating
<i>Alienation</i>			
Smith, Davy and Easterling (2004)	Survey	742	Alienation influenced prior cheating, but not likelihood of future cheating
<i>Extracurricular Activities</i>			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Extracurricular activities was correlated with cheating
<i>Fraternity/Sorority Membership</i>			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Fraternity/sorority membership is associated with cheating
Pino and Smith (2003)	Survey	675	Fraternity/sorority membership is associated with cheating
<i>Internet Use/Experience</i>			
Underwood and Szabo (2003)	Survey	291	Copying without a citation was predicted by how often students use the Internet

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)
Empirical Studies Examining Student Cheating Behaviors: 1997 – 2007

<i>Variable Study (Year)</i>	<i>Method</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Findings</i>
Past Cheating Behavior			
Nonis and Swift (1998)	Survey	301	Past cheating behavior predicts future cheating behavior
Smith, Davy and Easterling (2004)	Survey	742	Prior cheating has a direct effect on the likelihood of cheating
Time Spent Watching TV			
Pino and Smith (2003)	Survey	675	TV viewing is positively related to cheating
External Influences Related to Cheating			
Admonishment to Avoid Cheating			
Landau, Druen and Arcuri (2002)	Experiment	94	Admonishment to avoid cheating helped students detect and reduce plagiarism
Easy Classes/Lenient Professors			
Love and Simmons (1998)	Qualitative	6	The perception that the professor is lenient contributed to cheating
Grade Pressure			
Love and Simmons (1998)	Qualitative	6	Grade pressure increases cheating
Harsh Penalties for Cheating			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Cheating was higher at institutions with harsh penalties
In-class Deterrents			
Smith, Davy and Easterling (2004)	Survey	742	In-class deterrents did not reduce likelihood of cheating
Internet-Based Detection as a Learning Tool			
Kirkpatrick (2006)	Content Analysis	662	Use of internet-based plagiarism detection tools reduced plagiarism
Peer Behavior			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Peer behavior had a strong influence on cheating
Peer Disapproval			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Peer disapproval reduced cheating
Peer Reporting			
McCabe and Trevino (1997)	Survey	1,159	Peer reporting had no significant impact on cheating
Task Pressure/Complexity			
Love and Simmons (1998)	Qualitative	6	Task pressure increases cheating
External Influences Related to Cheating			
Time Pressure			
Love and Simmons (1998)	Qualitative	6	Time pressure increases cheating
Visible In-class Cheating Deterrents			
Nonis and Swift (1998)	Survey	301	When deterrents are high, gender, GPA, and rationalization are significant predictors of cheating frequency

cheating behavior, yet likelihood of getting caught may have a stronger impact than punishment severity on preventing cheating behavior.

Consistent with economic theory, students evaluate the risks and benefits associated with cheating behavior. One of the risks evaluated by marketing students would be the likelihood of being caught cheating; the higher the likelihood, the less students would engage in this behavior. Thus, in economic terms, the expected value would equal the net of the benefits versus the costs times the likelihood of detection. While many universities use a variety of detection methods, including more recently software for detecting plagiarized work, such as Turnitin.com, more evidence concerning whether these strategies prevent plagiarism is needed (Devlin 2006; Malouff and Sims 1996). In situations where students believe that the risk of getting caught is low, they are more likely to cheat (McCabe and Trevino 1993, 1995; Underwood and Szabo 2003). Based on research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: The likelihood of getting caught will have a negative impact on engaging in plagiarism.

Also consistent with economic theory, severity of punishment would increase the cost to the marketing student when evaluating whether or not to cheat. Research has demonstrated that students believe that sanctions impact cheating (Premeaux 2005), and fear of sanctions has been shown to reduce cheating behavior (Welch et al. 2005). However, research also indicates that penalty severity may not be a deterrent to cheating behavior (McCabe and Trevino 1997) in some contexts. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Severity of punishment will have a negative impact on engaging in plagiarism.

Method

Business students enrolled in marketing courses at a large southeastern university were asked to participate in the study. These courses were selected because these students were the population of interest and would be entering the field of marketing within a short period of time. Participation in the study was voluntary and responses remained anonymous. To reduce social desirability bias (Randall and Fernandes 1991), it was emphasized that the interest was in the students' actual opinions and not in what they perceived would be a "politically correct" answer. The introduction to the questionnaire read as follows: *"There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, so don't respond as you think you are 'supposed to.' Just record the way you feel personally. Answers are completely confidential. You will not be asked to supply your name or identified in any way."*

Since reporting of dishonest behavior can present problems in plagiarism research, question wording avoided terms such as "dishonest" and "plagiarism"; instead students were asked about specific behaviors without the use of leading terms (Scanlon and Neumann 2002).

The scale items for the plagiarism activities were modified from Scanlon and Newmann (2002) and included: 1) copied information and put it in a paper without a citation, 2) copied an entire paper without a citation, 3) turned in a paper that you didn't write, 4) purchased a paper from an on-line source, 5) taken test answer(s) from another student (looking at—whether used or not, asking, copying, etc.), 6) provided another student with test answer(s), and 7) copied homework from another student. Similar to the Scanlon and Neumann study (2002), students were asked on a five-point scale how often they and their classmates engaged in these activities (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often or Very Frequently). Students were also asked on a four-point scale the likelihood of being caught for each of these acts (Very Unlikely, Unlikely, Likely, or Very Likely). Lastly, students were asked the appropriate punishment for each act with options including No Action, A Lower Grade, No Credit on the Assignment, Failure in the Course, One Semester Suspension, Permanent Expulsion, and Expulsion with a Note on the Transcript.

Two hundred and thirty-eight (238) questionnaires were completed. The students were asked to respond to questions concerning their own behavior, the behavior of classmates, the likelihood of being caught, and appropriate sanctions for each of these behaviors. Specifically, questions addressed copying information without a citation, copying entire papers, turning in papers they didn't write, purchasing a paper on-line, taking test answers from another student, providing answers for another student, and copying homework. Respondents also provided descriptive information about themselves, such as gender, employment status, class standing, and major.

Results

As shown in the descriptive information provided in Table 2, respondents were almost evenly split based on gender with 51% female and 49% male. Students were taking upper level marketing courses, so most were classified as juniors or seniors (85%). The urban nature of the institution resulted in a student body which was on average 23 years old and more likely to work (77% worked at least part-time) than not (23%). The majority (74%) were Caucasian, with African-Americans (8.1%), Asian (6.4%), multi-racial (4.3%) and Hispanic (1.3%) groups represented in the sample.

Table 2
Demographics of Sample (n=238)

	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>Gender</i>	
Males	48.7
Females	51.3
<i>Employment Status</i>	
Employed—Full Time	38.3
Employed—Part-Time	38.7
Not Employed	23.0
<i>Class Rank</i>	
Freshman	0.4
Sophomore	1.3
Junior	42.9
Senior	42.5
Graduate Student	12.9
<i>Major</i>	
Business	78.2
Communications	5.8
Other	16.0
<i>Age</i>	
19-22	52.5
23-26	29.7
27-30	11.9
31+	5.9

Table 3
Self vs. Classmates Frequency of Plagiarism and Likelihood of Being Caught (n=238)

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Percentage¹ Self</i>	<i>Percentage¹ Classmates</i>	<i>Percentage² Likely to be Caught</i>
Copy homework	45.1	86.9	33.9
Provide another student with answers	30.3	76.7	46.4
Copy information without citation	27.3	77.5	43.0
Take test answers from another student	20.6	78.0	54.8
Copy entire paper	3.8	54.9	86.1
Turn paper in that I did not write	2.5	60.4	53.1
Purchase paper online	2.5	49.8	67.1

¹ Percentage responding “sometimes,” “often,” or “very frequently”; measured on a 5-point scale (1= never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often, and 5=very frequently).

² Percentage responding “very likely,” or “likely” to be caught; measured on a 4-point scale (1=very unlikely, 2=unlikely, 3=likely, 4=very likely).

As shown in Table 3, almost one-half of the students (45.1%) admitted to copying homework, with more than one-fifth admitting to providing other students with answers (30.3%), copying information without including citations (27.3%), and taking test answers from other students (20.6%). Far fewer admitted to copying entire papers (3.8%), turning in papers they did not write (2.5%), or purchasing papers online (2.5%). However, students believed that most of their classmates engaged in these activities, ranging from 86.9% (copying homework) to 49.8% (purchasing a paper). This dramatic difference raises concerns that students may believe that in order to remain competitive with classmates they would have to cheat since "everybody does it" or that their grades will suffer since a curve, if provided, is set by those with unfair advantages.

Table 3 also reveals that students believed the likelihood of being caught depends upon the type of plagiaristic behavior. Most believed that they would be caught copying an entire paper (86%), purchasing a paper online (67%), taking test answers from another student (55%) or turning in a paper they did not write (53%). Fewer believed that they would be caught copying homework (34%), copying information without a citation (43%), or providing another student with answers (46%). Perhaps web sites such as Turnitin.com have had an impact on student perceptions of the likelihood of being caught plagiarizing entire papers. It should be noted that Turnitin.com is a service used by the institution where these respondents are enrolled and that disclosure of its use is a required component of each instructor's syllabus.

Table 4 lists the sanctions students believed would be appropriate for each of these infractions. Despite a student handbook which specifies harsh penalties for many of these actions, ranging from a zero on the assignment to expulsion, few students (the highest being 10% for purchasing a paper online) indicated that suspension or expulsion was an appropriate penalty for any of these behaviors. The most frequently assigned penalty for almost all of the behaviors was receiving a zero on the assignment. The exception was for copying information without a citation, for which most students (63.1%) believed the penalty should be a lower grade on the assignment. Interestingly, 20% felt that no action should be taken for copying homework, and 11% felt that no action should be taken for providing others with answers. This finding supports our research question that not all cheating behaviors are viewed by students as being equal; that is, the recommended punishment varies by the action. In addition, the notion that some students believe that no action should be taken against those who copy homework or provide others

with answers suggest that these students view these actions as acceptable behaviors. Consistent with social network analysis, this finding may suggest that if some students view these actions as being appropriate, over time other students similar to them will also view these actions as appropriate. In addition, this finding further provides evidence that behaviors considered by marketing faculty to be cheating may not be similarly perceived as cheating by marketing students.

Measurement Models

The measurement models were tested with a two-step approach of exploratory factor analysis using SPSS 14.0 and confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.80. Principal components analysis was used to test for unidimensionality. The criterion for factor extraction was an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. Retained items required a loading of at least 0.5. Principal component analysis with varimax rotation was initially conducted on the seven types of cheating behaviors across four contexts (e.g., self, classmates, likelihood of being caught, and punishment). For self, likelihood of being caught, and punishment, two factors emerged as follows: copying information without a citation, copying an entire paper, turning in a paper you didn't write, and purchasing a paper online loaded on one factor; copying homework, providing another student with answers, and taking test answers from another student loaded on the other factor. For classmates, a single factor structure emerged.

These findings suggested that, in general, from a student's perspective there are two types of cheating behaviors, paper-related cheating and test/homework-related cheating. In order to assess convergent validity for these constructs, principal component analysis with varimax rotation was again conducted for each type of cheating behavior separately across the four contexts (e.g., self, classmates, likelihood of being caught, and punishment) as shown in Table 5. The items had acceptable factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha reliability scores (Nunnally and Bernstein 1994) across self, classmates, likelihood of being caught, and punishment contexts. Coefficient alphas ranged from 0.663 for paper-related cheating in the self version to 0.926 for test/homework-related cheating among classmates.

Since paper-writing plagiarism was viewed differently than test/homework-related cheating, the hypotheses were tested using two models, one for each type of cheating behavior. This approach also allowed for comparisons between the two models in order to answer the proposed research question concerning whether perceptions of classmates' cheating behavior, likelihood of being caught cheating, and severity of punishment

Table 4
Recommended Punishment for Engaging in Plagiarism

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Percentage Responded¹</i>						<i>n³</i>
	<i>No Action</i>	<i>Lower Grade</i>	<i>Zero on Assignment</i>	<i>Failure in Course</i>	<i>Suspension</i>	<i>Expulsion²</i>	
Copy homework	19.6	33.6	40.9	4.7	0.0	1.3	235
Provide another student with answers	10.8	24.7	43.7	16.0	2.6	2.2	231
Copy information without citation	11.0	63.1	18.2	5.1	0.4	2.1	236
Take test answers from another student	6.0	15.9	50.9	22.4	2.6	2.1	232
Copy entire paper	0.8	11.7	60.6	20.3	2.6	3.9	231
Turn paper in that I didn't write	1.8	3.5	56.2	30.1	4.0	4.4	226
Purchase paper online	1.4	6.8	44.8	37.1	5.4	4.6	221

¹ Respondents were asked which punishment they believed was appropriate for each behavior. This was measured as an ordinal scale with 1= no action, 2= a lower grade on the assignment, 3= no credit/"zero" on the assignment, 5=failure in the course, 6=one semester suspension, 7=permanent expulsion from the university, and 8=permanent expulsion with a notation on the student's transcript of "Academic Disciplinary Separation." No label was provided for "4" and few respondents chose this answer. Therefore, those answering "4" are not included in the table.

² Those answering "Permanent Expulsion" and "Expulsion with a Note on the Transcript" are combined due to low number of responses.

³ Number of respondents per question

Table 5
Principal Component Analysis and Cronbach's Alpha

<i>Behavior</i>	<i>Self</i>	<i>Classmates</i>	<i>Likelihood of Getting Caught</i>	<i>Punishment</i>
	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>
<i>Paper-Related Cheating</i>				
Copy information without a citation	0.532	0.830	0.779	0.763
Copy entire paper	0.860	0.907	0.840	0.880
Turn paper in that I didn't write	0.802	0.911	0.774	0.882
Purchase a paper online	0.723	0.807	0.751	0.825
Eigenvalue	2.189	2.995	2.476	2.814
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.663	0.887	0.792	0.859
<i>Test/Homework-Related Cheating</i>				
Take test answers from another student	0.787	0.944	0.900	0.891
Provide another student with answers	0.817	0.942	0.931	0.870
Copy homework	0.811	0.916	0.765	0.742
Eigenvalue	1.945	2.616	2.261	2.101
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.714	0.926	0.826	0.786

Table 6
Measurement Properties and Fit Statistics: Cheating on Written Papers

<i>Construct/Item</i>	<i>Standardized Loading</i>	<i>T-Value</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>	<i>Item Reliability</i>	<i>Variance Extracted</i>
<i>Cheating on Written Papers</i>					
How often YOU have done each of the following:			0.88		0.66
Copied information and put it in a paper without a citation.	0.61	9.34		0.34	
Copied an entire paper without a citation.	0.99	17.80		0.89	
Turned in a paper that you didn't write.	0.83	13.74		0.62	
Purchased a paper from an online source.	0.77	12.42		0.54	
<i>Classmates' Behavior</i>					
How often you believe YOUR CLASSMATES have done each of the following:			0.91		0.73
Copied information and put it in a paper without a citation.	0.81	13.41		0.60	
Copied an entire paper without a citation.	0.94	16.63		0.80	
Turned in a paper that you didn't write.	0.91	15.82		0.75	
Purchased a paper from an online source.	0.74	11.77		0.50	
<i>Likelihood of Being Caught</i>					
The LIKELIHOOD OF BEING CAUGHTdoing each of the following:			0.83		0.56
Copied information and put it in a paper without a citation.	0.77	11.81		0.54	
Copied an entire paper without a citation.	0.94	15.21		0.81	
Turned in a paper that you didn't write.	0.63	9.29		0.36	
Purchased a paper from an online source.	0.61	8.97		0.34	
<i>Punishment</i>					
CIRCLE the number that corresponds to the punishment you believe is appropriate for the behavior.			0.87		0.64
Copied information and put it in a paper without a citation.	0.64	9.58		0.37	
Copied an entire paper without a citation.	0.86	14.21		0.68	
Turned in a paper that you didn't write.	0.87	14.46		0.69	
Purchased a paper from an online source.	0.80	12.70		0.57	

Goodness-of-Fit Statistics

$\chi^2=739.65$ (df=98) CFI=0.74 RMSEA=0.15 p<0.01 NFI=0.71 SRMR=0.082

had the same impact for all types of marketing student cheating behaviors. The hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM).

Asymptotic covariances with listwise deletion were obtained from PRELIS 2.8 to estimate the measurement models. The items for each construct used in the paper-related measurement model are shown in Table 6. Parameter estimates, t-values, composite reliabilities, item reliabilities, variance extracted estimates, and fit statistics are also displayed in Table 6.

Composite reliability for each construct was high with 0.83 being the lowest for likelihood of being caught.

Convergent validity was supported in each construct as demonstrated by the significant t-values for all items (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). In each case the variance extracted estimate was greater than the suggested level of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker 1981), ranging from 0.56 for likelihood of being caught to 0.73 for classmates' behavior. The fit statistics were $\chi^2=739.65$ with 98 degrees of freedom (p=0.0). The fit indices were CFI=0.74, NFI=0.71 and RMSEA=0.15, SRMR=0.082.

The items for each construct used in the test/home-work-related measurement model are shown in Table 7. Parameter estimates, t-values, composite reliabilities,

Table 7
Measurement Properties and Fit Statistics: Test and Homework Cheating

<i>Construct/Item</i>	<i>Standardized Loading</i>	<i>T-Value</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>	<i>Item Reliability</i>	<i>Variance Extracted</i>
<i>Test and Homework Cheating</i>					
How often YOU have done each of the following:			0.86		0.67
Taken test answer(s) from another student (looking at – whether used or not, asking, copying, etc.).	0.88	15.82		0.78	
Provided another student with test answer(s).	0.87	15.33		0.75	
Copied homework from another student.	0.69	11.23		0.47	
<i>Classmates' Behavior</i>					
How often you believe YOUR CLASSMATES have done each of the following:			0.95		0.85
Taken test answer(s) from another student (looking at – whether used or not, asking, copying, etc.).	0.94	18.82		0.89	
Provided another student with test answer(s).	0.95	18.93		0.90	
Copied homework from another student.	0.88	16.91		0.78	
<i>Likelihood of Being Caught</i>					
The LIKELIHOOD OF BEING CAUGHT doing each of the following:			0.89		0.73
Taken test answer(s) from another student (looking at – whether used or not, asking, copying, etc.).	0.89	16.42		0.79	
Provided another student with test answer(s).	0.99	19.35		0.98	
Copied homework from another student.	0.65	10.87		0.43	
<i>Punishment</i>					
CIRCLE the number that corresponds to the punishment you believe is appropriate for the behavior.			0.78		0.56
Taken test answer(s) from another student (looking at – whether used or not, asking, copying, etc.).	0.91	13.96		0.83	
Provided another student with test answer(s).	0.77	11.75		0.60	
Copied homework from another student.	0.51	7.69		0.26	

Goodness-of-Fit Statistics

$\chi^2=381.87$ (df =48) CFI=0.84 RMSEA=0.18 p<0.01 NFI=0.82 SRMR=0.078

item reliabilities, variance extracted estimates, and fit statistics are also displayed in Table 7. Composite reliability for each construct was high with 0.78 being the lowest for punishment. Convergent validity was supported in each construct as demonstrated by the significant t-values for all items (Anderson and Gerbing 1988). In each case the variance extracted estimate was greater than the suggested level of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker 1981), ranging from 0.56 for punishment to 0.85 for classmates' behavior. The fit statistics were $\chi^2=381.87$

with 48 degrees of freedom ($p=0.0$). The fit indices were CFI=0.84, NFI=0.82 and RMSEA=0.18, SRMR=0.078.

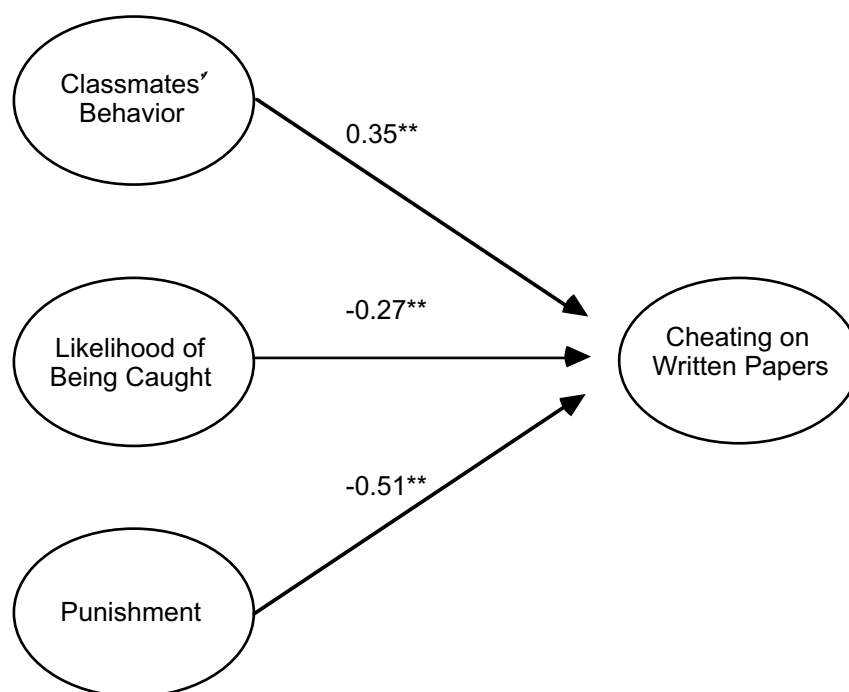
Structural Models

To test the hypotheses the data were subjected to structural equation modeling using LISREL 8.80. Model 1 examined paper-related cheating behavior and tested paths from classmates' behavior, likelihood of being caught, and punishment to self-reported cheating be-

Table 8
Structural Parameter Estimates

<i>Path</i>	<i>Model 1: Paper-Related Cheating</i>	<i>Model 2: Test/Homework-Related Cheating</i>
Classmates' Behavior → Self	0.35**	0.38**
Likelihood of Being Caught → Self	-0.27**	-0.08
Punishment → Self	-0.51**	-0.18**
χ^2	742.41	382.37
df	98	48
p	0.0	0.0
NFI	0.71	0.82
CFI	0.74	0.84
RMSEA	0.15	0.18
SRMR	0.08	0.08
** p<.01		

Figure 1
Plagiarism Model for Paper-Related Cheating



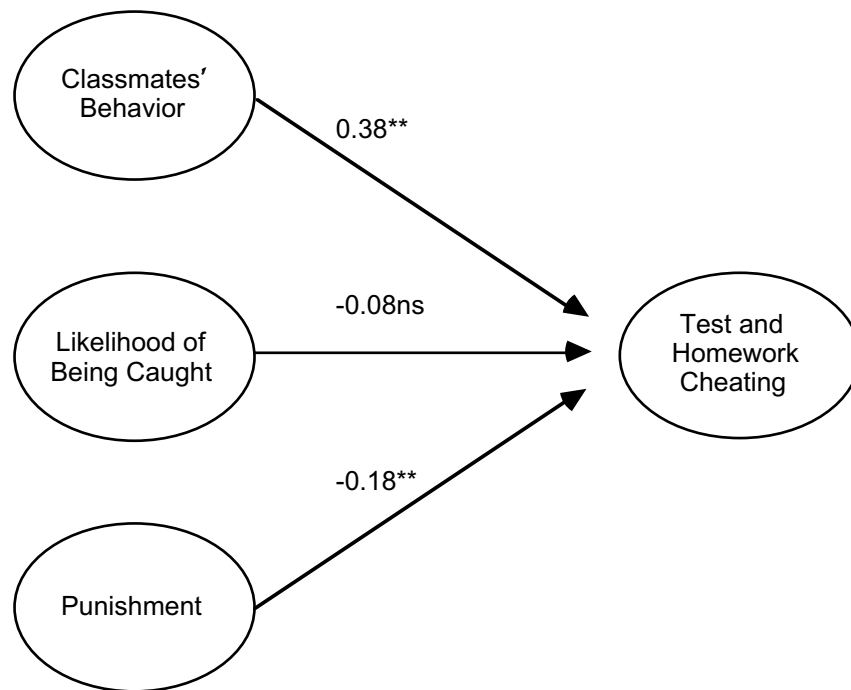
*p<.05; **p<.01

havior. Classmates' behavior was expected to be positively related to self-reported cheating behavior; however, likelihood of being caught and severity of punishment were each expected to have negative paths to self-reported cheating behavior. As expected there was a positive, significant path from classmates' behavior to self-reported cheating, and negative, significant paths from likelihood of being caught and severity of punishment to self-reported cheating behavior in support of

H1, H2, and H3. The model fit statistics were CFI=0.74, NFI=0.71 and RMSEA=0.15, SRMR=0.08 and χ^2 (98)=742.41, as shown in Table 8 and Figure 1.

Model 2 examined test/homework-related cheating behavior and tested paths from classmates' behavior, likelihood of being caught, and punishment to self-reported cheating behavior. Classmates' behavior was expected to be positively related to self-reported cheating behavior; however, likelihood of being caught and

Figure 2
Plagiarism Model for Test and Homework-Related Cheating



* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$
 ns=non-significant path

severity of punishment were each expected to have negative paths to self-reported cheating behavior. As expected there was a positive, significant path from classmates' behavior to self-reported cheating, and a negative, significant path from severity of punishment to self-reported cheating behavior, in support of H1 and H3. However, unlike Model 1, the path from likelihood of being caught to self-reported cheating on tests/homework was not significant. This finding is counter to prior research on criminal behavior that suggests that the likelihood of being caught is a greater deterrent than punishment severity (Leung 1995). In addition, it suggests that students do not believe that they are likely to be caught on test and homework cheating. Many students are now aware of plagiarism detection software for paper-related cheating and/or recognize that marketing faculty could simply submit portions of their writing to Google to search for similar work. However, there is not a comparable method for detecting test and homework cheating, particularly since all of the answers would be the same if everyone submitted correct work. Furthermore, homework and tests are usually hand-written which further limits the instructor's ability to detect plagiarism. This difference between the two models answers the research question that ante-

cedents of cheating behavior differ for different types of cheating. The model fit statistics were CFI=0.84, NFI=0.82 and RMSEA=0.18, SRMR=0.08 and $\chi^2(48)=382.37$, as shown in Table 8 and Figure 2.

Discussion

Plagiarism among college students continues to be an area of concern. While students admit to taking part in acts of dishonesty such as copying homework, most do not admit to more severe acts such as copying entire papers or purchasing papers online. These issues and ethical discussions will continue to dominate conversations among marketing professors and administrators as they strive for ways to eliminate such activity. This research adds to the discussion by revealing that students view cheating behaviors not to be absolute, but rather to fall on a continuum of severity, with some marketing students indicating that less severe actions such as copying homework or providing others with answers should not be punished. These findings should raise concerns for marketing faculty who may presume that all students agree that these actions are wrong. If left unchecked, contagion theory suggests that these ideas could disseminate through student populations

such that over time greater numbers of students would believe that these actions are acceptable. To control this misperception, marketing educators should make clear to their students what is, and is not, acceptable behavior with regard to sharing answers.

Further, the threat of punishment does not provide a deterrent to all types of cheating behavior. Thus, marketing educators may need to employ a range of deterrents and preventative measures in order to fully eliminate this behavior in the classroom. Lastly, though perhaps beyond the scope of marketing educators alone, institutions can reduce cheating by fostering a culture of academic integrity.

Specific actions that can be implemented by marketing educators include preventative policies/procedures, fostering a culture that affirms academic integrity, teaching techniques that reduce cheating, and sanctions that motivate students to present their work honestly. Policies and procedures that could be implemented by marketing educators to inhibit cheating include clarifying expectations (McCabe and Pavela 2004; Prenshaw, Straughan, and Albers-Miller 2001), teaching students about academic dishonesty (Hansen 2003), making plagiarism penalties clear to students (Harris 2001), fostering a life-long commitment to learning, and fostering student connections to professional student groups, faculty, and prospective employers.

The academic culture of an institution plays also a role in the prevention of student cheating behaviors, beyond the scope of individual marketing faculty. Institutions can address cheating by instituting honor codes (Gilgoff 2001; McCabe and Pavela 2000) and academic integrity policies (McCabe and Trevino 1993, 1995), enforcement of existing academic integrity policies, encouraging peer disapproval of cheating (McCabe and Trevino 1997), providing handbooks that clearly define cheating behaviors (Harris 2001; McCabe and Trevino 1997, Wilson 1999), including a discussion of cheating behavior during freshman orientations (McCabe and Trevino 1997), and installing early warning systems that address excessive absenteeism (Hudson 2005-2006).

Marketing educators can also curb cheating behaviors through the use of teaching techniques that clarify non-acceptable behaviors (Landau, Druen, and Arcuri 2002), including visible in-class cheating deterrents such as proctoring during exams, use of multiple versions of tests, prohibiting the use of cell phones during exams, checking IDs in large lecture halls, requiring backpacks and other personal items be left far away, leaving empty seats separating students, the use of essay-type questions (Devlin 2006; Nonis and Swift 1998), and asking students to turn in a photocopy of referenced materials (Swift, Denton, and Nonis 1998).

Outside of the classroom marketing instructors can use detection software to identify plagiarism (Thompson 1994) or use this software as a deterrent to educate students on plagiarism (Kirkpatrick 2006). The use of experiential learning methods (McCabe and Trevino 1997) such as internships (Sankaran and Bui 2003) or service learning (Weber and Glyptis 2000), rather than high-stakes tests, can also reduce cheating as students become active participants in learning rather than memorizing material.

Though all institutions have policies that dictate possible sanctions for cheating behavior, they may not be equally enforced across departments, colleges, and universities. Only if students believe that sanctions will be enforced will these sanctions serve as deterrents. Thus, institutions should facilitate the enforcement of penalties for cheating and reduce the burden of enforcement placed on marketing faculty. Though the rights of the student must be protected, the ability for faculty to enforce sanctions (McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield 2001) should be uncomplicated.

These results provide evidence that most marketing students feel that plagiarism is commonplace among their peers and the likelihood of getting caught depends upon the act. Though many students did admit to participating in some types of cheating, the majority claimed to participate in such activities rarely or never. Perhaps most interesting is the finding that the likelihood of getting caught cheating involving writing assignments was related to student cheating, but not the likelihood of getting caught for homework or test cheating. This suggests that students perceived the differences in the likelihood of getting caught based on the type of act.

As universities and marketing departments have pushed for greater awareness and detection of plagiarism, attention must also be paid to the penalty tied to a specific action. At the university where the data was collected, penalties range from a reduced grade on the assignment to expulsion from the university, with the penalty recommended by the instructor. If students are aware of recommended penalties for certain actions, and the penalties are harsh enough to serve as a deterrent, perhaps fewer incidents of plagiarism would occur. This may also provide evidence that some behaviors, such as copying homework, are viewed by administrators as plagiarism. The findings suggest that the less effort expended in engaging in these behaviors appears to have an impact on whether the student believed the action to be wrong, consistent with research that suggests that passively benefiting is not as egregious as actively trying to benefit from an unethical activity (Muncy and Vitell 1992; Vitell and Muncy 1992).

Limitations and Future Research

The data was collected using a self-administered paper-and-pencil survey at a single institution. There has been some criticism of this method for studying student plagiarism given the possibility that students may under-report cheating behavior due to fear of sanction or in order to respond in a socially desirable manner. Another criticism of using surveys or experimental methods is that these methods presuppose that students understand plagiarism and are able to accurately report these behaviors (Crown and Spiller 1998). Thus, future marketing researchers should consider using indirect questioning methods (Fisher 1993), such as third-party measurement techniques, and/or qualitative methods (Ashworth, Bannister, and Thorne 1997), and multiple institutions for data collection when examining student cheating behaviors.

Seventy-four percent of the marketing students who participated in this study belonged to a single ethnic group. This could have created problems for generalizing the findings to institutions with higher proportions of other ethnic groups. Future researchers should examine the effects of country of origin or ethnic background on cheating behavior, particularly since there is a paucity of research on nationality and student cheating (Crown and Spiller 1998). In some collectivist cultures, copying work is considered a sign of respect toward the author (Thompson and Williams 1995). International students from these cultures who study in the United States may be unfamiliar with rules of plagiarism and unknowingly engage in cheating behaviors.

Future research should also examine a range of penalties and the impact of each on reducing plagiarism. The findings of this study suggest that a one-penalty-fits-all approach may not have the intended effect of reducing student cheating. Likewise, future researchers should examine the probability level at which likelihood of being caught may be a factor in deterring cheating on tests and homework.

Future research directions may also include assessing other attitudinal, emotional, and ethical variables as antecedents of cheating behaviors and intentions. Behavioral variables such as fraternity/sorority membership, time spent viewing TV, and involvement in extracurricular activities should also be explored as antecedent and/or moderator variables in the model.

Future research should also examine other influences on student cheating behavior such as the impact of the number of hours worked (Dutton and Gokcekus 2002), country of origin on plagiarism (Thompson and Williams 1995) or ethnic background. Like other time-related factors that have been previously examined in the

literature, time spent working reduces the amount of available time for scholarly pursuits. Therefore, number of hours worked would be expected to be positively related to cheating behaviors. However, older students tend to work longer hours and older students have been shown to engage in cheating less often than younger students. Thus, there may be confounding effects between the number of hours worked and age on student cheating behavior. Also, future researchers should examine the mediating role of variables that impact student cheating such as rationalization, the view that cheating is a trivial matter, or lack of knowledge about academic cheating may have on student plagiarism.

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