

Encouraging responsible conduct in class, as teacher and student.

You see two classmates helping each other on a homework that was supposed to be carried out independently.

*"While the obvious action is to report the incident so that the grader/instructor take a closer look at their copies, I also believe in that this advantage will even out with exams and this is why homework are only a small part of the overall grade normally."*

*"I would not in general be bothered about that. I will try to do my homework with complete honesty."*

*"If homework made up a small portion of the overall course grade, I'd probably do nothing. Instructors probably cant expect perfect compliance with non-cooperation on a take home assignment."*

You are fairly sure that the classmate on your right in an in-class test is copying from the student on their right.

*"I have never been in this situation before because it is normal to concentrate 100% in a test. But I think in this scenario, it is teachers/TAs responsibility to deal with them."*

*"I would report to the instructor (anonymously)."*

*"How would you know if you are taking the test at the same time and should be keeping your eyes on your own test."*

As an undergraduate, a friend asks to borrow your homework. You know that your friend considers he/she needs an A to get in to medical school. The friend is reasonably capable in this class, but has not left enough time to do this assignment.

*“While I sympathize with their predicament and I acknowledge that sometimes very competent people can be set back arbitrarily by grades, the risk in allowing my friend to plagiarize my work would just be too high, so I tactfully decline.”*

*“I think this can happen once. A whole life should not depend on one homework, and given that the friend is a capable student, I would give my homework once. But if this happens more than once, then the friend might be in over his head and thus I would stop giving my homework [...]”*

*“Advise that friend that this would put both of you two in a terrible situation, and usually instructor takes later homeworks or gives partial credits.”*

*“I think it’s reasonable to expect that someone who will one day be a doctor is doing his own work.”*

*“I would decline to share my homework but perhaps offer to answer questions on how I approached problems.”*

It is sometimes asserted that “those who cheat only hurt themselves.” Explain to what extent you agree with this statement.

**A.** *“I see the logic behind this statement and think that it is generally true, other than the case in which a class or exam is curved. ”*

**B.** *“I dont think its true that cheaters only hurt themselves. Classes are often graded on curves, and students who falsely inflate their scores through cheating may affect the curve. When cheating is pervasive enough (or ignored by the administration), it can also damage the universitys reputation for academic integrity, subsequently harming all students.”*

*"I agree with the statement because cheating is not a sustainable work ethic. There will always be a situation down the line where the cheating will catch up."*

*"Cheating suggests that they still don't understand the topic well enough and as such if these topics were to be used in real life they would not be able to apply it well, which basically will only cause trouble to the person."*

*"If you cheat and you are not punished, other people will do the same things as you, then you hurt the environment."*



The Washington Post, [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A57836-2004Sep2.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A57836-2004Sep2.html)

*"The argument that cheaters hurt only themselves is false. Cheaters do hurt other people, and they do so to help themselves. Students cheat because it works. They get better grades and more advantages with less effort. Honest students lose grades, scholarships, recommendations and admission to advanced programs. Honest students must create enough peer pressure to dissuade potential cheaters. Ultimately, students must be willing to step forward and confront those who engage in academic dishonesty."*

*“This really depends on the context. I think that cheating certainly can hurt others in undergraduate courses with harsh grade curves.”*

If someone cheats to get from  $B+$  to  $A$ , then someone else who would have gotten an  $A$  gets  $A-$  and someone who would have gotten  $A-$  gets  $B+$ .

How do (and don't) grades matter in a PhD program?

Suppose that, while grading homework as a GSI, you suspect that a student has used material from the internet inappropriately in their homework. What would you do?

*"If their use of this material was more or less plagiarized, I wouldn't give credit for that question. But if, for example, they seemed to be mimicking a proof approach found on Stackoverflow or something along those lines, I would grade according to the effort and thought evident in their statement of the proof. So a student who fleshed out this proof in their words in a way that makes it clear they understand each step would get at least substantial partial credit, but not a simple copy of the proof."*

*“Personally I think it is okay to warn him/her about the the situation for the first time. I would also suggest the student to at least mention the source in his/her assignment if they end up using internet materials.”*

As a professor, some options to deal with suspected academic misconduct are as follows:

(A) Do nothing. You see that the students involved are doing very poorly in the class, and they will get their eventual reward anyhow with a poor grade. Besides, you are less than 100% sure about your suspicions, and it would be bad for all concerned to make an accusation that turned out to be false.

(B) Give a warning, but take no punitive action. Acknowledging that the students who are cheating are stressed by academic pressures and may not have adequate ethical training, you give the whole class a warning to clarify the situation, but take no individual action. This also deals with your concerns about being less than 100% sure about your suspicions.

(C) Let the student(s) know you suspect misconduct and tell them they will score zero for this assignment. Let them know they will fail the course if this happens again.

(D) Write up a description of your suspicions and turn it in to the office of the Office of the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education. The student(s) will go through the formal process described at

<https://lsa.umich.edu/lsa/academics/academic-integrity/procedures-for-resolving-academic-misconduct.html>

*“Since the first three approaches does not involve a formal report, they are never appropriate because there is no trace of the event, even if sanctions are applied. Only approach (D) is relevant, while instructor resolution (with report to OAD) may be more appropriate in smaller-scale cases.”*

*“B and D. For B, it pertains to the case that the instructor is not quite sure, like it could be a coincidence if students all follow the example solution given by textbook to write their own work. For D, it is applied to serious cases, like cheating in term essay or project report and it is obvious, then instructor should report the case.”*

Beyond dealing with misconduct, sometimes such issues can be avoided by changing the structure of the class. Perhaps teachers can run the class in ways that make cheating less possible. Suggest one feature a class might have that encourages misconduct (but might have some other academic benefit) and another that discourages misconduct (but might have some other academic cost).

*"[...] A ranking-based course grading system may discourage student collaboration on assignment but might also have the unintended consequence of fueling unhealthy, destructive competition amongst students."*



*"I think it is necessary to mention the policies regarding academic misconduct at the beginning of the class. For example, the instructor should make it clear to the students that they will lose points if they are caught cheating."*

*"If a class required so much work that it would be difficult for a student to complete the work on their own, considering all of their coursework across classes, this could encourage students to divide up problems and share to lighten the load."*

*"Encourage misconduct: use some classical questions as homework. Or give everyone the same project question to code.  
Discourage misconduct: Make original homework every time the instructor teaches the course."*

*"One way to avoid cheating on STATS 250 exams is that professor will prepare random seat tickets to assign students seat. This would certainly help prevent cheating but also it consumes a lot of time to prepare them for more than 1,700 students."*