Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Integrity
Final Report

Presented to the UAA Faculty Senate
30 April 2012
I. Introduction and Charge

The 2010-2011 Faculty Senate appointed the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Integrity to assess the perceived and actual extent of academically dishonest behaviors at UAA, analyze current policies in light of the current situation, and develop responses and policy refinements to address these issues.

The preliminary stage of this process involved surveys of students and faculty at UAA. Modeled on a nationally used set of instruments developed by Dr. Don McCabe of Rutgers University for the Center for Academic Integrity, the surveys were administered over the 2010-2011 academic year. A preliminary report of the survey results was presented to the UAA Faculty Senate Retreat on 24 August 2011 and made available to the UAA community through the Academic Honesty and Integrity site (http://www.consortiumlibrary.org/blogs/ahi/) hosted by the UAA/APU Consortium Library. The full text of this Report is included below in the Appendix.

After the presentation of the report, the 2011-2012 Faculty Senate extended the appointment of the Ad Hoc Committee to devise policies to address academically dishonest behaviors. The goals of this new charge were:

2. Recommendations for actions to be taken to improve Academic Integrity at UAA,
3. Fix inconsistencies in definitions among UAA policy documents.
4. Review current sanctions, and devise future policies to standardize and make sanctions more effective.

This mandate was expanded in January 2012 with a request by President Gamble for proposals by the various MAU Faculty Senates for revisions to the UA Board of Regents policies. The Ad Hoc Committee was charged with incorporating some of its policy recommendations into the UAA Faculty Senate proposal.

This report represents the final recommendations and policy proposals of the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Integrity.
II. Final Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee

1. **Require Academic Integrity Tutorial.** Prior to completing 20 credit hours, we recommend that all students be required to complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial. We recommend a certificate system similar to the current system used for IRB training.

2. **Update and Maintain Academic Integrity Tutorial Regularly.** In coordination with Faculty Technology Center, we recommend updating the Academic Integrity Tutorial so that the quiz will offer randomized questions from a large database that draws examples from different disciplines.

3. **Integrate Academic Integrity Tutorial into Freshman Seminar.** If the university adopts a freshman seminar class, the Academic Integrity Tutorial should be a requirement of that class.

4. **Develop a Faculty Guide to Academic Integrity.** This guide should include how to submit incidents, possible sanctions, available resources, reporting structures, etc.

5. **Encourage Faculty Members to Report Incidents of Academic Dishonesty.** Faculty members are strongly encouraged to report academic dishonesty incidents, even if they choose to handle the situation themselves. Widespread reporting will help to create a more accurate picture of academic dishonesty issues at UAA. It will also identify trends, locate repeat offenders, and ensure a fair and equitable response to cases of academic dishonesty.

6. **Develop an Online Reporting System.** We recommend developing an easy online reporting system for faculty to communicate cases of academic dishonesty. See VI. Sample Student Code of Conduct Report Form.

7. **Establish Faculty Development.** Through CAFE and New Faculty Orientation, we recommend developing training on a number of topics related to academic integrity, including: how SafeAssign works and how to use it ethically, how to handle academic dishonesty cases, how to avoid and discourage dishonesty, and how to make policies clear through syllabi and assignments.

8. **Establish Visibility of Academic Integrity Issues.** A number of actions should be taken to communicate the importance of academic integrity with students. Some examples include: focusing on integrity at Freshman Convocation through a speaker and other activities, creating a more developed version of Board of Regents policies and the UAA Student Code of Conduct with examples, and developing standardized university-wide guiding documents and instructional resources.

9. **Update Board of Regents Policy about Academic Dishonesty.** We recommend approaching the Board of Regents to update section R09.02.020 of the Student Code of Conduct, Section A: Cheating, Plagiarism, or Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty. See III. Proposed Changes to Board of Regents Policy.

10. **Implement a Sanctioning Rubric for Cases of Academic Dishonesty.** We recommend the development of a consistent and transparent set of sanctioning guidelines. Such guidelines would clarify sanctioning policies for faculty, students, and
administrators. Given the complexity of designing such guidelines and the necessity to integrate such guidelines with other policies proposed here (particularly the proposed changes to the Board of Regents policy), we have limited our discussion to outlining a reporting system and sanction spectrum. See VI, Proposed Sanctioning Guidelines.

11. **Establish an Honors Council Involving Students and Faculty.** Currently, disciplinary sanctions are determined by administration. We recommend involving faculty and students by creating an Honors Council as an alternative method for adjudicating Academic Dishonesty cases.

12. **Note Severe Cases of Academic Dishonesty on Transcripts.** With the Registrar, we recommend exploring the possibility of creating a notation for transcripts that can be used for severe cases of academic dishonesty, including dropped courses. In some cases, the notation could be removed after sanction is implemented.

13. **Establish a Full-time Coordinator or Director of Academic Integrity.** This position would provide leadership, coordinate academic integrity activities, develop and maintain campus resources, guide faculty development, implement strategic planning and review, investigate and sanction cases of dishonesty, etc. This position should require someone with academic experience. See V. Description for Proposed Academic Integrity Coordinator position.

14. **Create a Faculty Senate Standing Committee on Academic Integrity.** We recommend that the work of this committee continue by establishing a standing senate committee. If this is not desirable or feasible, then we recommend the work of this committee be continued by SASS. Part of this committee’s responsibility should be following up on the Academic Integrity Survey conducted last year, as well as overseeing the proposed recommendations.
III. Proposed Changes to Board of Regents Policies

The ultimate authority for the Student Code of Conduct lies in the University of Alaska Board of Regents’ Policies. UAA Policies mirror those policies established by the UA Board of Regents, resulting in a singular unified text.

The Ad Hoc Committee proposes the following changes, which are intended to clarify the existing text and account for changes in teaching practices. These policies are presented below, with both the current text and the proposed changes recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Integrity.

Text Added – Text added to the current policy.

Text deleted – Text deleted from the current policy.

REGENTS’ POLICY
PART IX – STUDENT AFFAIRS
Chapter 09.02 - Student Rights and Responsibilities. Page 5.

UNIVERSITY REGULATION
PART IX – STUDENT AFFAIRS
Chapter 09.02 - Student Rights and Responsibilities

R09.02.010. General Statement: Student Rights and Responsibilities

The purpose of this regulation is to further define the University of Alaska’s Student Code of Conduct, or Code, and to establish a framework for the enforcement of the Code. These procedures, and their elaboration in MAU rules and procedures, will allow for fact-finding and decision-making in the context of an educational community, encourage students to accept responsibility for their actions, and provide procedural safeguards to protect the rights of students and the interests of the university. These procedures are applicable to all students and student organizations.

R09.02.020. Student Code of Conduct

Disciplinary action may be initiated by the university and disciplinary sanctions imposed against any student or student organization found responsible for committing, attempting to commit, or intentionally assisting in the commission of any of the following categories of conduct prohibited by the Code.

The examples provided in this section of actions constituting forms of conduct prohibited by the Code are not intended to define prohibited conduct in exhaustive terms, but rather to set forth examples to serve as guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

A. Cheating, Plagiarism, or Other Forms of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty applies to examinations, assignments, laboratory reports, fieldwork practicums, creative projects, or other academic activities. Examples include:

21. presenting as their own the ideas or works of another person without proper acknowledgment of sources;
22. utilizing devices that are not authorized by the faculty member during an examination or assignment;
23. using material sources (including but not limited to text, images, computer code, audio/video files) not authorized by the faculty member during an examination or assignment;
24. providing assistance to another student or receiving assistance from anyone another student during an examination or assignment with or without their knowledge in a manner not authorized by the faculty member;
25. submitting work done for academic credit in previous classes, without the knowledge and advance permission of the current instructor;
26. knowingly permitting their works to be submitted by another person without the faculty member's permission;
27. acting as a substitute or utilizing a substitute; in any examination or assignment
28. deceiving faculty members or other representatives of the university to affect a grade or to gain admission to a program or course; or
29. fabricating or misrepresenting data in support of laboratory or field work;
30. possessing, buying, selling, obtaining, or using a copy of any material intended to be used as an instrument of assessment examination or in an assignment in advance of its administration;
31. altering grade records of their own or another student’s work; or
32. offering a monetary payment or other remuneration in exchange for a grade;
33. violating the ethical guidelines or professional standards of a given program.


IV. Proposed Sanctioning Guidelines

The University of Alaska Anchorage believes that academic integrity violations are best addressed through procedures designed to educate students. However, the necessity of maintaining the quality of education and of protecting the reputation of the University and its degrees requires the possibility of punitive sanctions to reinforce educative approaches and to arrest immediate or consistent issues. The guidelines included here are intended to clarify how the University can best achieve these goals.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

In cases of suspected academic dishonesty, the decision to refer or report the case to the Dean of Students Office and to assess any penalty to the grade of the assignment lies solely with the Instructor of Record in the course.

The Reporting Procedure for a typical case would work as follows:

I. Initial Suspicion of an Academic Integrity Violation

II. Instructor of Record Decision
   A. Handle Solely through Instructor: All academic sanctions are imposed by the Instructor of Record; The Dean of Students Office is not involved.
   B. Report Without Request For Investigation: The Student Code of Conduct Complaint Form is completed and submitted to the Dean of Students Office; no further action is taken beyond the academic sanctions imposed by the Instructor as above.
   C. Referral for Investigation: The Student Code of Conduct Complaint Form requesting investigation is completed; Instructor can impose grade sanctions at this point.

III. Investigation by the Dean of Students Office
   A. Not Responsible: Case is dismissed and the Instructor is notified.
   B. Responsible: Sanctions are imposed based on the guidelines listed below, and the Instructor of Record is notified of the outcome (if necessary).

DISCIPLINARY SANCTION DESCRIPTIONS

The sanctioning system employed by the Dean of Students Office is based on a spectrum of possibilities, from a Written Warning through Expulsion from the University of Alaska system. The spectrum approach allows the flexibility to address cases based on specific circumstances, severity of the behavior, and repeated violations.

The sanctions are not mutually exclusive, and can be combined to create a sanction that might be most effective in modifying the student’s behavior in the future. For example, Discretionary Sanctions such as essays might be given as an educative complement to a punitive sanction of a Warning or Disciplinary Probation.

Sanctions are only imposed once the Dean of Students Office has reached a conclusion of “Responsible.” Note that the assignment of grades in relation to any reported case is outside the purview of the Dean of Students office, and rests solely with the Instructor of Record.

Warning – A written notice that a student has violated UAA’s Student Code of Conduct, which can be used as evidence of previous offenses in future cases. (If a student receives a warning,
the Dean of Students Office does not disclose a disciplinary record about a student to a third party, i.e., a medical school)

**Mandatory AI Tutorial** – The student would be required to take the Academic Integrity Tutorial and successfully pass the final quiz under the supervision of a designated representative of the Dean of Students’ Office.

**Recommendation for Removal from Program** – A written assessment to the student's current department recommending removal from the department’s program. The department makes the final decision based on its established policies.

**Disciplinary Probation** – a written warning that includes the probability of more severe disciplinary sanctions if the student is found responsible for violating UAA’s Student Code of Conduct for a specified probationary period. (If a student is placed on disciplinary probation, the Dean of Students Office will disclose a disciplinary record of a student to a third party, i.e., a medical school, after receiving a proper release of information)

**Discretionary Sanctions** – Discretionary sanctions are designed primarily to educate the student as to the consequences and repercussions of the lack of academic integrity. The sanctions can include (but is not limited to) essays, written apologies, presentations, mentoring meetings, counseling, educational classes, community service work, or other uncompensated labor. They should be assigned only in conjunction with other sanctions.

**Transcript Notation** – A notation is placed on the student’s official transcript noting the student was found responsible for violating UAA’s Student Code of Conduct. A notation for the first offense could be removed through the completion of additional discretionary sanctions as determined by the Dean of Students’ Office.

**Suspension** – The separation of the student from the University of Alaska for a specified period of time. The student may not participate in University of Alaska events or be present on University of Alaska property for a specified period of time.

**Expulsion** – The permanent separation of a student from the University of Alaska. The student may not participate in University of Alaska events or be present on University of Alaska property.
V. Description of Proposed Academic Integrity Coordinator Position

One result of the Ad Hoc Committee’s study is the conviction that UAA’s current structure (where academic integrity is one small piece of one person's much larger workload) does not allow for what is needed to address the problem at the institutional level: strong leadership; quick, careful, and fair investigation and response to cases of dishonesty; dedication to education and prevention; and consistent faculty development.

Also, one result of the Ad Hoc Committee’s instigation of a public debate about academic integrity is an increase in the number of cases that have been reported to the Dean of Students office. On the one hand, this is a good thing; it demonstrates that there is a growing understanding among faculty about the importance of reporting violations of academic integrity. On the other hand, it exacerbates the lack of institutional personnel to truly deal with such violations in a timely, consistent, and efficient manner.

Under the current structure, the Dean of Students office is required by law to privilege the handling of disciplinary cases concerning behavior, substance abuse, violence, or sexual misconduct. The result is that academic integrity cases are de-prioritized with current staffing levels. The delay in addressing academic integrity violations reduces the perceived seriousness of the violation in the eyes of students and contributes to the frustration of faculty who see the university as uncommitted to enforcement of policies. Moreover, the inability to process cases consistently and efficiently leaves UAA vulnerable to charges of differential application of policies and unequal treatment. As such, the committee feels that it is irresponsible to end its work without attempting to address this personnel gap.

The Ad Hoc Committee recommends the creation of a full-time position of Academic Integrity Coordinator. The Coordinator should have an extensive academic background, including significant experience as a classroom instructor. The position the committee is proposing is modeled on positions currently existing at numerous institutions. The majority of the duties are based on the Quinnipiac University Director of Academic Integrity Job Description for a faculty position and the George Mason University Director for Academic Integrity Initiatives Job Description.

**Academic Integrity Coordinator Job Responsibilities**

The Academic Integrity Coordinator is the primary officer of the University dealing with issues of academic integrity. The position will be to design, implement, maintain, and coordinate policies and resources dealing with academic integrity issues across UAA colleges and units. Given the necessity of close interaction with academic departments, disciplinary and pedagogical paradigms, and the educative duties of the position, the Academic Integrity Coordinator have an extensive background in instruction and significant classroom experience.

The primary duties of the Academic Integrity Coordinator will be:

- Facilitate ongoing strategic planning to ensure quality, continual improvements, efficiencies and effective services. Foster planning and decision-making informed by internal and external data that is derived from assessment, trends, and best practices.
• Educate students about academic integrity through events such as an Academic Integrity Week, campus lectures, ethical and integrity case study competitions, mock hearings, public service announcements, and class presentations

• Work with the International Student Advisor to inform and educate international students

• Maintain Academic Integrity Tutorial

• Maintain Academic Integrity website

• Provide workshops and training for all faculty about academic integrity, including strategies to prevent academic dishonesty

• Create and enforce a set of minimum sanctions for different types of academic misconduct

• Develop a guide for faculty about academic integrity

• Work with the Dean of Students office to fairly and efficiency address academic integrity violation complaints and carry out sanctions

• Create a method to assess learning outcomes for students who receive educational sanctions for academic dishonesty

• Create a Citation Tutorial and sponsor citation workshops

• Create an Academic Integrity Honors Council

• Serve as advisor to academic honor societies

• Develop a reporting system for faculty to refer cases of academic misconduct

• Generate reports to the University community
VI. Sample Student Code of Conduct Report Form

Student Code of Conduct Report Form

Name of Student(s): __________________________________________________________

Student ID#: __________________________________________________________________

Date of Alleged Violation: _______________  Course (CRN) #: ______________________

Name of reporting Faculty: __________________ Faculty Phone #: _______________________

Campus Address: __________________ Faculty email: _______________________________

ALLEGED VIOLATION OF ACADEMIC HONESTY

☐ CHEATING (Board of Regents Policy, R09.02.020.A 1., 2., 6., 8.)

☐ PLAGIARISM (Board of Regents Policy, R09.02.020.A 4.)

☐ FACILITATION (Board of Regents Policy, R09.02.020.A 3., 5.)

☐ FABRICATION (Board of Regents Policy, R09.02.020.A 7., 9.)

☐ OTHER FORM OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY (state Board of Regents Policy Paragraph(s) below, if applicable)

_____________________________________________________________________

DESCRIPTION OF ALLEGED VIOLATION

Please attach a detailed description of the violation including any physical evidence - original assessment(s), exams, emails, SafeAssign report or similar.

RESOLUTION OPTIONS

☐ I am directly referring this case to the Dean of Students Office

Faculty Signature: ______________________________ Date: __________________________

The student ☐ is / ☐ is not aware of the above allegation.

I have taken the following action(s):

☐ F or 0 on assignment/exam ☐ F in course

☐ Reduced grade on assignment/exam: __________________________________________

☐ Other action(s), please describe (attach additional sheets if necessary):

_________________________________________________________________________

☐ I do not wish an investigation by the Dean of Students (the Dean of Students reserves the right to investigate the case if the student is a repeat offender).
VII. APPENDIX: Survey Summary Report, Final Version

I. Academic Integrity Survey Methodology

The 2010-2011 Faculty Senate appointed the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Integrity to pursue five goals, the first of which was to “Administer an academic honesty assessment tool (or survey) developed by the Center for Academic Integrity to samples of UAA administrators, faculty and students as appropriate.” This effort would give a snapshot of academic integrity at UAA, and could form the basis for the establishment of a university-wide Honor Code and the development of responses to incidences of academic dishonesty.

This summary report presents the preliminary results of surveys conducted among faculty and students during the 2010-2011 academic year. The instruments used were developed by Dr. Don McCabe of Rutgers University for the Center for Academic Integrity. These survey instruments have been used over the last 15 years at more than 60 schools and with over 15,000 student responses.

The Faculty survey was conducted via e-mail during Fall Semester 2010. All faculty—including those at the community campuses—were invited to participate in a web-based survey sent by email. A total of 158 responses were received, representing approximately 21% of faculty employed during that semester. The response rate is typical for surveys of this type.

The Student survey was conducted in Spring Semester 2011. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee administered a paper-and-pencil version of the survey in-class to all students in a random selection of non-distance GER courses at all levels. This approach was taken to assure a higher response rate and a more representative sample of students than likely with web-based survey techniques. A total of 416 students completed the survey, representing 90% of enrollment in the selected classes. The response rate was phenomenal, and well above that achieved in many national studies. The Ad Hoc Committee believes this survey provides the clearest view of student behavior conceivably possible.

In addition, a web-based version of the survey was distributed to all UAA students enrolled during Spring Semester 2011. (Students who completed the survey in class were instructed not to complete the web-based survey.) Given the low response rate (less than 5%) and known problems with self-selection in web-based surveys, the results are not included here.

The faculty and student surveys contained some identical or very similar items, so where possible, we are presenting these results side-by-side.

The final stage of the methodology was to convene focus groups of administrators, faculty and students to more fully understand these responses. These Focus Groups were held during Spring Semester 2012.
II. PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMICALLY DISHONEST BEHAVIOR

Both faculty and student surveys asked respondents to rank a range of academically dishonest behaviors on a scale from “Not Cheating,” “Trivial Cheating,” “Moderate Cheating” or “Serious Cheating.” Significant discrepancies appeared in faculty and student responses to types of academically dishonest behavior and their relative seriousness. Faculty tended to view all forms of academically dishonest behaviors as more serious than did students. Some clear patterns, however, emerged in the data.

The largest discrepancy between faculty and students occurred in questions about collaboration between students. Over two-thirds of students viewed consulting others when instructed to work alone to be not cheating; less than 18% percent of faculty shared this view. However, views between faculty and students appear to converge as behaviors become more specific and/or represent a more significant component of a student’s work. For instance, 72% of students and 17% of faculty view “working with others when the instructor asked for individual work” as Not Cheating or Trivial Cheating. However, only 52% of students and 13% of faculty viewed receiving “unpermitted help on an assignment” as trivial. When the behavior was “copying from another on a test with his/her knowledge,” the number dropped to 9% of students and 7% of faculty.

A similar convergence is seen in relation to research-oriented behaviors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviors Seen as “Trivial” or “Not Cheating”</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating Bibliography</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating Lab Data</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating Research Data</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying, word for word, from any written source</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The more extensive the academic dishonesty, the more seriously it is taken by students.

We see two possible explanations for these statistics which we intend to investigate further in the focus groups. The first explanation is that both faculty and student perceptions of the seriousness of academically dishonest behavior depend on how the results of the behavior are used. Students view “consulting” other students for ideas on a paper that will largely be written by the student him/herself is viewed by students as less serious than copying on an exam that is intended to represent a student’s total work for a semester.

An alternative interpretation is that the likelihood that a student engaging in the behavior will be caught and sanctioned influences perceptions of seriousness. Using unpermitted help on a homework assignment is less likely to be detected by the instructor than turning in a midterm paper copied from a paper mill. Therefore, students and faculty may see the latter as more serious.

A final issue that needs further investigation is the small number of faculty members who consider almost all forms of academically dishonest behavior to be of trivial seriousness. While any sampled population can be expected to produce outliers, understanding why faculty may view some academically dishonest behaviors as not serious is vital to developing supportable university-wide academic policies. We intend to gain clearer insight on this issue by specifically including faculty members who hold these views in the Focus Groups.

Overall Perceptions of Cheating at UAA

While the above data represents student and faculty perceptions of specific types of academically dishonest behavior, the survey also asked for faculty and student perceptions on the amount of academically dishonest behavior they believe is happening at UAA.
### Table 1: Student vs. Faculty Perceptions of the Seriousness of Specific Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working w/ others (in person) when instructor asked for individual work</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working w/ others electronically when instructor asked for individual work</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences from written source without citing</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using a false or forged excuse to obtain an extension on a due date or exam</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying (by hand or in person) another student's homework</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying (electronically) another student's homework</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences from electronic source without footnoting</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating or falsifying lab data</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating or falsifying research data</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Q/A from someone who has already taken test</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using unpermitted handwritten crib notes during a test</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using electronic crib notes during a test</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying another student's computer program</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating on a test in any other way</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using electronic device as unauthorized aid during exam</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning in paper copied, at least in part, from a student</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitting a paper purchased or obtained from Website</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping someone else cheat on a test</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning in work done by someone else</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying, almost word for word, form any written source</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using digital tech to get unpermitted help during an exam</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying from another during test with his/her knowledge</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying during a test without his or her knowledge</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning in paper from paper mill (written by student)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: UAA Faculty web survey, Fall 2010; Student in-class surveys of GER courses, Spring 2011.
Faculty Responses: N = 158; 21% response rate. Student Responses: N = 416; 90% response rate
Overall, only 15% of students believe that “Cheating is a serious problem at UAA,” compared to 52% of faculty.

Furthermore, three questions asked with what frequency respondents thought that common kinds of behaviors happened at UAA; the behaviors were: (a) “Plagiarism on Written Assignments,” (b) “Inappropriately Share Work in Group Assignments” and (c) “Cheat on Tests or Exams.”

On the question of plagiarism, over 70% of students believed that such activity Seldom, Very Seldom or Never occurs. In contrast, more than half of faculty thought that plagiarism occurs Often or Very Often.

Almost 80% of students believed that cheating on tests and exams occurred Seldom or even less often. On this issue, a similar number of faculty agreed, with over 50% believing that the practice occurred Seldom, with only approximately a quarter believing it occurred Often or Very Often.

On the question of the inappropriate sharing of work in group assignments, an overwhelming majority of both students and faculty felt this type of behavior was common. Interestingly, a slightly higher percentage of students than faculty believed the behavior occurred Very Often (approximately 14% vs. 11%). A similar number of students, however, felt it occurred Very Seldom.

Conclusion

Faculty and students hold sharply different perceptions concerning both the seriousness and the frequency of academically dishonest behaviors. Overall, students view most academically dishonest behaviors as less severe than do faculty, and believe they occur less frequently. Consequently, students consider cheating a much less serious concern at UAA than faculty.

One consistent corollary to this trend, however, is that as behaviors carry higher “rewards” in the form of grades (high value) or a greater chance of being discovered (high risk), student and faculty perceptions of the severity converge.

III. ACADEMICALLY DISHONEST BEHAVIOR AT UAA

Refer to Table 2: Self-Reported Frequency of Academically Dishonest Student Behaviors

The student survey also asked students to self-report their own experience with academically dishonest behaviors. Students were asked to identify the number of times within the previous year they had engaged in the same list of academically dishonest behaviors presented in Table 1 (above). Students could select from “Never,” “Once,” “More than Once” and “Not Relevant.” Note: those who stated the question was ‘Not Relevant’ were removed from the analysis; the percentages reported here reflect only students who did not check “Not Relevant.”

The results are significantly at odds with the overall student perceptions of the problem of cheating at UAA. While over 70% of students responded that they believed plagiarism occurred Seldom, Very Seldom or Never at UAA, about a third of students admitted to paraphrasing, plagiarizing or limited copying of assignments. Moreover, between 15% and 18% of student respondents admitted engaging in these activities more than once.

When the question turned to academically dishonest behavior on graded assignments—tests, exams, lab reports, etcetera—the percentage of students engaging in the activity dropped to around 1 in 8 (12%).

A third group of questions, concerning the most extreme varieties of behavior—turning in another student’s work or purchased from an online site or paper mill—had the lowest levels, generally 7% or lower.
### Table 2: Self-Reported Frequency of Academically Dishonest Student Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>% of Students Responding Once</th>
<th>% of Students Responding More than Once</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working w/ others (in person) when instructor asked for individual work</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences from electronic source without footing</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences from written source without citing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying (by hand or in person) another student's homework</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Q/A from someone who has already taken test</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working w/ others electronically when instructor asked for individual work</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping someone else cheat on a test</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheating on a test in any other way</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using a false or forged excuse to obtain an extension on a due date or exam</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using unpermitted handwritten crib notes during a test</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying from another student during a test with his or her knowledge</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating or falsifying lab data</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying another student's computer program</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying during a test without his or her knowledge</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying (electronically) another student's homework</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricating or falsifying research data</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning in paper copied, at least in part, from another student</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copying material, almost word for word, from any written source</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using electronic crib notes during a test</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using digital technology to get unpermitted help from someone during an exam</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning in work done by someone else</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using electronic/digital device as unauthorized aid during exam</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submitting a paper purchased/obtained from a Website</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning in paper from paper mill (written by another student)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: In-class surveys of GER courses conducted at UAA, Spring Semester 2011.
Response: N = 416; 90% response rate
In general, these numbers correspond with student perceptions of academically dishonest behavior: the more “severe” forms of cheating have fewer students reporting engaging in them.

One interesting dynamic appears concerning cheating on actual exams, however. While only 13% of students reported having cheated on an exam, 17% admitted to helping another student cheat on a test. Moreover, on a separate question on the survey 1 in 4 students stated that they had seen a student cheat on an exam Often or Very Often. This may indicate that a relatively small percentage of students are actually cheating on exams, but they are doing so with the aid and certainly the knowledge of a significant number of fellow students.

Online Cheating

One special concern of the committee was the question of online cheating at UAA. The expansion of online courses has created a new dynamic in course expectations and behavior. The survey asked faculty who indicated that they teach online courses if they had observed various forms of online cheating, and students if they had engaged in the same forms. The student respondents overall have not taken a large number of online courses. Almost half reported never taking an online course, while 34% reported only taking 1 or 2 courses. The data collected here likely indicate a MINIMUM level for cheating in the increasingly popular online courses.

Those who have taken online courses, however, are engaging in academically dishonest behavior at a rate higher than faculty believe. The frequency of students consulting outside sources for online assignments—either Internet sources, notes or books—is roughly three times as common as faculty believe it to be.

The only activity where faculty experience and student admittance corresponded concerned collaboration on online exams; both groups placed the occurrence at around 11%. This statistic is notable because it tracks incredibly closely with the percentage of students who admit to cheating on exams and major written assignments generally, which may indicate that online courses do not encourage a higher level of cheating.

Table 3: Cheating in Online Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looked up information on the Internet when not permitted</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received unauthorized help from someone on online exam</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used notes or books on a closed-book online exam</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborated on an online exam when not permitted</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: UAA Faculty web survey, Fall 2010; Student in-class surveys of GER courses, Spring 2011.

Faculty Responses: N = 158; 21% response rate. Student Responses: N = 416; 90% response rate
Conclusions

Levels of self-reported academic dishonesty behavior at UAA are high, with more than a third of students admitting to engaging in numerous dishonest behaviors at least once in the previous year. This is a higher rate than students believe occurs at UAA, although it is less prevalent than many faculty members believe.

A clear distinction exists in different types of cheating, however. Those activities which depend on limited collaboration with other students or “small” amounts of usage of unauthorized sources have significantly higher frequency. As the stakes of the behavior increased—either in terms of grades or the possibility of being caught—the frequency of such behavior declined. On the most common types of high-value/high-risk behavior—cheating on tests or turning in papers with significant borrowing—frequency remained stable, with about 1 in 8 students engaging in them.

The data on online cheating is partially suspect because of the relatively few students who have significant experience in online classes. However, the data clearly indicates faculty currently underestimate the level of academically dishonest behaviors occurring in online classes, even though such behaviors are at least as frequent in online courses as in traditional courses.

IV. PERCEPTIONS OF CURRENT UAA POLICIES AND PENALTIES

The survey revealed another sharp distinction between faculty and students on the effectiveness of current UAA policies in discouraging academically dishonest behavior.

Over half of faculty rated the effectiveness of policies as Weak or Very Weak, while almost the same percentage of students rated the effectiveness as Strong or Very Strong. Yet just over a third of faculty (40%) and students (35%) agreed that the current judicial process is “fair and impartial.” These incongruent responses may indicate that perceived levels of cheating color the perception of the effectiveness of policies in deterring such cheating.

Faculty view cheating as extensive at UAA and correspondingly may hold negative perceptions of the effectiveness of current policies. Significant minorities place the blame as shared between other faculty and students. A quarter believe other faculty members are not vigilant in punishing academic dishonesty and a third feels faculty understanding of policies are Weak. Almost half of faculty (47%) feels students should report other students for cheating and two-thirds (65%) believe students have a weak understanding of UAA policies on academic integrity. The result appears to be a widespread feeling that policies are weakly enforced and the judicial process is weighed in favor of the student.

Despite faculty perceptions, students self-report a high level of knowledge about UAA academic policies. An overwhelming majority of students (91%) claim knowledge of current policies and almost 6 in 10 believe faculty knowledge of these policies is Strong or Very Strong.

Yet knowledge is not the same as understanding, and this may be the root of the disagreement between faculty and students. Students reported learning about UAA policies largely from faculty members (with the Student Handbook a distant second), a fact which corresponds to the majority of faculty who include information on policies in their syllabus (76%) and discuss their views on academic integrity in class (67%). Yet there may be a disassociation in how information is transmitted to students. While over two-thirds of faculty discuss policies at the
beginning of a semester, discussions of specific behaviors and how to avoid them is most often conducted only in preparation for specific assignments. Students may “know” specific policies, but not understand these policies are part of a comprehensive set of ethical behaviors expected of them.

Conclusion
Perceptions of the frequency of cheating appear to be related to opinions about the effectiveness of current policies. Faculty believe the current process is ineffective due to lack of support by both students and other faculty. Students view the policies as effective and widely advertised, but perhaps excessively enforced.

V. REPORTING OF ACADEMICALLY DISHONEST BEHAVIOR

For any effective policy against academically dishonest behavior, reporting of the behavior is the necessary first step. Survey results, however, indicate significant factors mitigate the reporting of suspected cases both by faculty and by students.

Faculty Reporting
Statistics from the UAA Dean of Student’s office over the previous five years show only 183 cases where students were “Found Responsible” for academically dishonest behaviors. Although the number of cases has been increasing (and doubled last year), the average is still less than 40 cases per year. This equals the rough number of cases of self-reported cheating on exams during the previous year in just the sample set of students surveyed. Clearly, significant levels of academically dishonest behavior are either going undetected or unreported by faculty.

One reason for low levels of faculty reporting lies in the availability of alternative strategies for dealing with cases outside of reporting to the Dean of Student’s office. Indeed, only 1% of faculty report doing nothing about suspected cases of cheating. Faculty prefer to deal with most cases themselves: 63% of faculty fail students on assignments, and a quarter (26%) are willing to fail a student for an entire course. Less than half, however, are willing to report a suspected case of major cheating to the Dean of Students or even their Department Chair or Dean. Just over half of faculty (52%) have referred cases of suspected cheating to a Chair or a Dean for investigation, and the majority (59%) have been Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the results.

Yet 93% of faculty also report having ignored incidences of cheating one or more times in their courses. By far the most common reason for ignoring such cheating is lack of evidence or proof (34%). Other reasons, such as lack of administration support, concerns about the impact on the student, or triviality of the offense, were relatively minor considerations. Faculty tend to err on the side of caution when punishing students or initiating a referral process.

The combination of these two factors—faculty preference for in-house solutions and desire for significant evidence before sanctioning—may jointly be responsible for faculty perceptions of cheating and the weakness of existing policies. Faculty sanctions against students extend only to the specific course. There is neither possibility of follow-up to assure behavior has been corrected nor tracking of potential habitual cheaters. This may, over time, create a perception of more extensive cheating as separate faculty members confront what may be repeated cases as independent, isolated episodes.

Student Reporting
One of the more surprising findings concerned student knowledge of cheating by other students. One in four students has personally witnessed an act of cheating in the
last year, but only 3% of students have reported fellow students for such behaviors. A significant minority of students is familiar with cheating, but choose to remain silent.

The survey data suggest the reason for this unwillingness lies in a value judgment by students. Only 1 in 5 students considered it Likely that they would report a fellow student for cheating, and an astounding 96% are Unlikely to report a close friend. While ethical considerations of “being a rat” undoubtedly contribute to this reluctance, about half of students (48%) believe that fellow students, even close friends, would not react strongly if they knew the student in question had committed an act of cheating. Quite simply, students among themselves do not seem to consider academically dishonest behaviors as particularly shameful.

This nonchalance disappears when the observer is a non-student, with 88% of students believing their parents would react strongly if they knew the student had cheated. Combined with the tendency of students to cheat less as the chances of getting caught rise, this fact indicates students are more concerned with how their actions appear to persons in positions of authority than with peers.

**Conclusions**

Most faculty members appear to prefer to deal with suspected cases of academic dishonesty themselves and only with strong evidence. While this indicates an admirable level of professionalism by the faculty, it may actually allow academically dishonest behavior to continue undetected as students move from class to class.

The survey results strongly indicate that it is unlikely that students would be willing to report on fellow students for academically dishonest behavior. There is a culture of nonchalance concerning cheating among students; they appear not to consider it a significant issue among themselves. This will be the major impediment in the successful implementation of any Honor Code at UAA.

**VI. SUMMARY SURVEY FINAL CONCLUSIONS**

The frequency of academically dishonest behaviors at UAA represents a significant problem both pedagogically and ethically for the reputation of the university.

There is a unique culture of cheating at UAA apparently influenced by a number of factors. Among these are student perceptions of various kinds of academically dishonest behavior and the value they place on academic integrity. Collaborative activities or limited use of unapproved sources is not considered by students to be academically dishonest, and over a third of students have engaged in them at least once in the last year. More extensive cheating is viewed more negatively, but still engaged in by over 1 in 10 students. Students are also very reluctant to report cheating by other students.

Yet faculty reluctance to share incidences of suspected cheating with colleagues or administrators may also contribute to the culture of cheating at UAA. Such silence hampers the ability to create consistent policies to guide students and indeed may encourage chronic cheating by a minority of students.

**Focus Groups**

The final stage of the investigation was three focus groups of students, faculty, and administrators held during Spring Semester 2012. All groups were asked to consider scenarios of academically dishonest behaviors to further elucidate perceptions of cheating and to gauge acceptance of possible policies to reduce academic dishonesty. The committee’s final recommendations reflect the opinions of the focus groups.