



Responding to In-Progress Cheating

The UC Davis Code of Academic Conduct places shared responsibility for upholding academic integrity on students and faculty. If you have reason to suspect cheating during an examination, and if it is practical to do so, you may intervene to try to stop the misconduct while avoiding disruption of the exam process. Research has shown that students are less likely to cheat when faculty take steps to prevent, confront, and report cheating. At UC Davis, most reports of suspected academic misconduct are resolved by an informal meeting between the student and SJA, with the student admitting the offense and accepting agreed-upon sanctions.

Faculty are not required to confront students suspected of cheating during the exam and may choose to simply observe the behavior (sometimes, it may be impractical to take immediate action because it would disrupt the exam or other students). If you decide to intervene, the following suggestions can help you deal with such situations.

During the Exam: Recommended Steps for Responding to Suspected In-Progress Cheating

- * Do not stop a student from completing an exam, even if you believe he or she is cheating. If students are talking or appear to be exchanging information (copying, passing notes, text-messaging, etc.), if you see wandering eyes, or if there are other suspicious activities, get the names of those involved and take the following steps as appropriate.
- * Approach the students and talk to them directly. Use a low voice to avoid disturbing other students. Quietly instruct them to stop talking and/or tell them that they must not look at or towards others' papers.
- * Do not simply assign the student a grade of zero or "F" on the test or a grade of "F" in the course – campus procedures call for suspected misconduct to be reported to SJA. Academic Senate Regulation 550 provides that students must admit to cheating or be found in violation after a disciplinary process before a grade penalty can be imposed.
- * If you suspect cheating, you may collect (or photocopy) what the student has done so far and give the student a blank exam or the copy of his/her exam to complete the test.
- * Remind the class that no talking is allowed during exams and that students must keep their eyes on their own papers.
- * Separate the students by asking the student(s) or their neighbors to move to new seats. If they protest/refuse to move, calmly state that you will not debate the issue during the exam, that you have authority to make such requests, and that they will be permitted to finish the test.
- * If a student appears to be using unauthorized materials (e.g., crib notes, books, or unauthorized electronic devices such as cell phones, PDAs, etc.), or has unpermitted materials out or visible, instruct the student to give these items to you.
- * If you learn a “ringer” may be taking an exam for a student, ask that individual for ID. If you learn before the exam that there will be a ringer, but you don't have a name (and if you have assistance from TAs), ask all students for IDs. If the ringer does not provide ID, take the exam and write down a description of the individual.

Before the Exam: (see *Creating a Climate of Academic Integrity: Tips to Prevent Cheating*)

- * Before the exam starts, remind students of their responsibilities under the Code of Academic Conduct, and that violations will be confronted and referred for discipline.
- * Tell students to keep their eyes on their own papers and to cover their work.
- * Give oral and written instructions about what materials can or cannot be used. Prohibit the use of electronic devices in exams, including cell phones. Tell students that a ringing phone will result in an automatic deduction of points from the exam because of the disruption it causes to other students.
- * Instruct students that all unauthorized materials (notes, books, etc.) must be put away so they are not visible to anyone. Similarly, require students to turn off and put away out of sight all electronic devices.
- * Have students zip up and close their backpacks, and put them completely under their chairs/seats.
- * Monitor exams to deter/prevent cheating (especially in large classes or crowded rooms). Monitors may answer questions, assist students in maintaining standards of academic integrity, and confront and report misconduct.
- * Arrange for alternate seating, or use multiple test versions on different color paper.

After the Exam: (see *Reporting Academic Misconduct*)

- * Review suspect exams for evidence of cheating.
- * If you have collected unauthorized materials, retain and review the notes/books/devices to see if they contain information relevant to the subject of the exam. Talk to SJA about whether any books or electronic devices must be returned to the student before the student meets with SJA.
- * If you or your TAs saw suspicious conduct, have each witness write up a statement of what he/she observed.
- * Submit a report to SJA using the report form available on-line, or call us if you're unsure whether to refer the student.

For more information about responding to cheating, about the disciplinary process, or about the Code of Academic Conduct, please call SJA at (530) 752-1128 or see our website at <http://sja.ucdavis.edu>.