The introduction to the University of Georgia’s policy on academic honesty, A Culture of Honesty, states that teaching assistants, as members of the University community, are responsible for “creating and maintaining an honest university.” This means being familiar with the policy and making sure your students understand how the policy applies to academic honesty in your class. The policy can be found online at honesty.uga.edu. In practical terms, a policy of academic honesty means setting up a classroom environment where all students have a legitimate chance for their academic work to be evaluated fairly because all members of the class have adhered to the highest standards of honesty in completing their work. Following is a list of suggestions you might consider in fostering an environment of academic honesty in the classes you teach.

**Tips for Dealing with Suspected Academic Dishonesty**

**Syllabus**

*Reference the policy.* Include the url for A Culture of Honesty on the syllabus: honesty.uga.edu.

*Make it clear that you support and uphold the policy.* On the syllabus and in class, state your support and obligation to uphold the policy in order to provide a fair learning environment for everyone. State your expectation that each member of the class is responsible for upholding the standard of the policy.

**Written Assignments**

*Set clear expectations and criteria for success.* Provide students with an explicit assignment along with a rubric or a detailed criteria for successful completion of the assignment.

*Teach students how to be academically honest.* Provide examples of what constitutes plagiarism. Give students an opportunity to practice using quotations and paraphrases with appropriate citations.

*Stage large assignments.* Poor time management is often the reason students are tempted to use someone else’s work. Stage writing assignments and other large projects so that students must submit work showing progress over time (e.g., topic, working thesis, note cards, preliminary bibliography, outline, multiple drafts). These can be simply checked for completion.

**Laboratory Reports**

*Set clear expectations for group work.* State in writing how students should write up laboratory results on which they worked as a group. Give examples.

*Encourage individual responsibility for learning.* Incorporate individual interpretation and synthesis into the requirements for the assignment. Make understanding laboratory work essential for success in the course by testing what they have learned.

**Tests**

*Reduce student perceptions of anonymity.* Get to know your students by name.

*Reduce student fear of failure.* Provide many opportunities for evaluation so that a single test does not become the only chance to do well in the course. Providing many low-stakes opportunities is better than providing fewer high-stakes opportunities.
Use testing procedures and conditions that discourage cheating. Outline for your students the testing procedures and expectations. Provide a large enough room for students to spread out. Provide an area to deposit book bags and materials in the front of the room. Establish and articulate policies about electronic device use during exams. Each semester, design new tests, or significantly revise old ones. Consider having students contribute items.

Group Projects and Other Cooperative Efforts

Set clear expectations. Be specific on what constitutes individual contribution to a group project.

Encourage individual effort. Include individual participation as a graded component of group work. Include peer evaluation of individual efforts and contribution.

Computer Work

Set clear guidelines for work expectations. Explain clearly the guidelines and rationale for working alone or with other students on computer projects.

Reduce chances of “technical difficulties.” Require all work to be backed up to avoid excuses about technical failures.

Tips for Dealing with Suspected Academic Dishonesty

Be well-informed about the policy. Know and understand the policies and procedures outlined in UGA's academic honesty policy, A Culture of Honesty.

Do not confront suspected students. As policy indicates, do not confront a student you suspect of cheating. You must allow the student to complete the assignment in question.

Remind students of the policy. Before testing or before assignments are due, remind students of the policy. If you notice suspicious behavior, document what you see and remind the whole class that tests are monitored and all students are expected to do their own work.

If possible, intervene without confronting suspected students. Ask groups of students to spread out or move to provide a better testing environment. If individuals persist, have multiple observers or readers document what you have observed.

Clearly document evidence of dishonesty. Carefully compile all evidence pertaining to the incident and show it to your departmental supervisor.

Follow UGA’s procedures for reporting suspected dishonesty. Within 15 days of discovery of the alleged dishonesty, you or the faculty member responsible for assigning the student's final grade should report the matter by completing a Report of Possible Academic Dishonesty Form (download at honesty.uga.edu). Submit it to the Coordinator for Academic Honesty by email at honesty@uga.edu.

Follow UGA’s procedures for handling the alleged dishonesty. Assign an “I” grade on the grade roll until the matter is resolved. The OVPI will contact the student to arrange a mutually convenient time for Facilitated Faculty/Student Discussion. Keep in mind that if the student and faculty member are unable to reach an agreement during the Facilitated Discussion and the case proceeds to a Continued Discussion, you are merely a witness to the proceedings and must abide by the decision of the academic honesty panel.

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