## A Collation and Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submitted by the Learning and Teaching Centre August, 2005</th>
<th>“Instructors and students uphold AI as a commitment to independent achievement, respect for learning and moral obligation to honesty.” (University of Victoria, Instructor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Cheating destroys the value of an education by undermining the good work performed by those who practice honesty and integrity.” (University of Victoria, Student)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Everybody should be involved in supporting academic integrity, because without it, knowledge is without value.” (University of Victoria, Teaching Assistant)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive Summary

In the spring of 2004, the Academic Integrity Survey, authored by Dr. Don McCabe (Rutgers University) was implemented at the University of Victoria. The primary purpose of this project was to describe the perceptions and actions of UVic students, instructors, and teaching assistants related to academic integrity and to understand some of the factors that mediate those views and behaviours. It was intended that the results of the study be used to inform actions to reduce academic misconduct if, in fact, the results suggest that action is necessary. Approximately 20% of students, faculty, and teaching assistants responded to the web-based survey.

The majority of the questions posed in the survey required a specific response that could be quantified. In addition, three open-ended questions were posed to which a significant number of respondents provided their perceptions on academic integrity (AI) at UVic and suggestions for the improvement of processes to encourage and sustain AI.

General Findings

- The quantitative outcomes of the UVic AI survey were similar to the other 11 Canadian institutions that have participated in this longitudinal research project. No comparison on qualitative results is possible given the protocol for involvement in the longitudinal study.

- There were very few differences in the responses and response patterns amongst students, instructors, and teaching assistants across the different UVic Faculties.

- There is a relatively strong belief that there is a positive culture of academic integrity at UVic and that the strengthening of this culture is critical in the prevention of more serious forms of academic misconduct.

- The most commonly reported forms of academic misconduct were identified by students, instructors, and teaching assistants as “less serious” types of academic misconduct. The vast majority of these incidents of academic misconduct were associated with the use of Internet resources, the manner in which academic assignments are completed, and citation forms and processes.

- The most common forms of “less serious” AI violations appear to be caused by poor communication of academic standards and the consequences for violation of these standards, lack of clear guidelines and educational preparation for academic assignments, and inconsistent use of strategies to deter academic misconduct. Students also identified time stress, lack of attention on the part of the instructor, and ineffective forms of assessment as other factors in cases of academic misconduct.

- In answer to questions that required a categorical response, moderate and serious forms of academic misconduct were infrequently reported or observed by all three respondent groups and there was general agreement across groups that, for the most part, there is a positive climate of academic integrity at UVic. Then again, analyses of the responses to the open-ended questions suggest a less positive picture of the frequency of these forms of academic misconduct. The inconsistencies between these two sources of information suggest under-reporting of instances of serious academic misconduct by the larger pool of respondents who gave categorical responses to the initial part of the survey. Conversely, it may indicate that those who chose to respond to the
open-ended questions may not represent the larger pool of respondents and had different experiences with academic misconduct.

- Failure to report or follow up on suspected academic misconduct was reported by approximately 50% of instructors. Failure to take action on suspected academic misconduct appeared to result from lack of sufficient evidence or a sense that the type of academic misconduct suspected was trivial.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

- Students, instructors and teaching assistants are aware of the need for AI and the negative impact that violations of AI have on the perceived quality of education at UVic and this awareness should be acknowledged and reinforced.

- The most common forms of academic misconduct could be addressed through departmental and Faculty level educational initiatives. As Faculties vary significantly in their academic culture, these initiatives need to be determined by their academic members and implemented in a manner congruent with their culture.

- Instructors, both regular faculty and sessional instructors are crucial to the effective implementation of any AI initiatives and require administrative and academic resources to ensure that they understand UVic AI standards and practices, that they communicate these standards and practices to students in a consistent manner, and that they are able to learn about and employ educational strategies to prevent academic misconduct.

- Since all constituent groups consistently linked the perceived quality of education to AI, a university-wide initiative, with leadership from senior administration, to communicate the importance of AI to both undergraduate and graduate education would provide a broad foundation for the activities at the Departmental and Faculty level.

This printed report contains an introduction, key findings from the both the qualitative and quantitative data, cross connections from these sources under thematic headings accompanied by some graphical data, and general recommendations. Accompanying this printed report is a CD that contains the following:

- An electronic copy of this report

- A report of the quantitative survey results in tables

- A PowerPoint™ presentation of the comparison between the results for specific Faculties and the institution to be used by Deans and Chairs/Directors in presentations.

- A series of PDF documents of the graphical representation of response frequencies of the all respondents on each question on the survey that required a categorical response.

- Excel files of the frequency data for each question. The qualitative data is not included as that may violate the confidentiality of some respondents. [Note: Copies provided to each Dean will include the quantitative data for their Faculty and the collapsed data for the institution so that they can make an internal comparison].

- Excerpts from the LTC newsletter on academic integrity that provide some guidance for actions to address academic misconduct at the academic unit and course levels.

When the CD is played, an index will be available to guide the reader to the various sections.
# Table of Contents

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 5

Background ..................................................................................................................... 5

Purpose ............................................................................................................................ 5

Summary of Methodological and Data Analyses Issues .................................................. 5

Survey Implementation and Response Frequency and Pattern ........................................ 6

Accompanying CD ............................................................................................................ 7

Key Findings from the Quantitative Results ................................................................. 8

Key Findings from the Qualitative Results ................................................................. 11

What to Celebrate, Areas for Improvement, and Cross Connections Between Qualitative and Quantitative Results ................................................................. 16

Awareness and Understanding of Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policies and Penalties ............................................................................................................. 16

Sources for Information About Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Guidelines .................................................................................................................................. 18

Discussion of Guidelines and Consequences ................................................................... 19

Frequency of Academic Misconduct ................................................................................. 21

Cheating on Tests or Examinations and in Courses ....................................................... 23

Perceived Seriousness of Academic Misconduct ............................................................. 25

Reactions to and Reporting of Cheating .......................................................................... 26

Safeguards to Reduce Cheating ....................................................................................... 29

Perceptions of the Learning Environment at UVic ......................................................... 30

Conclusions and General Recommendations ................................................................. 32
Introduction

Background

The University of Victoria was the eleventh Canadian university to participate in a longitudinal study on academic integrity (AI) that originated at Rutgers University (New Jersey) and the Center for Academic Integrity, at Duke University (North Carolina). To ensure the project’s appropriateness for the UVic context, a team of UVic personnel, including student, faculty and librarian representatives of the Senate on Academic Standards and the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning, engaged in a series of discussions with the principal investigator, Dr. Donald McCabe during the year prior to the implementation of the survey.

Purpose of the Survey

Although the participation of UVic in the academic integrity survey contributed to Dr. McCabe’s longitudinal project, and to the generalizability of his results, the primary purpose of this project was to describe the perceptions and actions of UVic students, instructors and teaching assistants related to academic integrity and to understand some of the factors that mediate those views and behaviours. It was anticipated that the data collected at our institution would be used to inform actions to reduce academic misconduct if, in fact, the results suggested that action was necessary. There was not a central intention to make a comparison of levels of academic misconduct among academic units but were aware that Faculty administrators may want to be informed of any significant differences between the responses of their students, instructors and teaching assistants and that of the overall university. As well, the survey was not intended to identify differences between our institution and any other institution included in the survey, but understood that any differences may be of interest to senior administrators.

Summary of Methodological and Data Analyses Issues

The UVic AI survey team identified a number of issues in the survey related to the consistency of rating scales and wording of questions. They proposed revisions to the questionnaires to conform to accepted survey design. However, the university’s involvement in the longitudinal study limited the number of changes that could be made to the questionnaire without compromising the integrity of the research being conducted by Dr. McCabe. We also had were limited to the analysis of the data adopted in the longitudinal study since the main analysis was conducted by personnel at Duke University and therefore were restricted to frequency distributions and the use of mean scores and standard distributions to describe the overall data. However, we did gain access to the raw data of each academic unit in order to determine any significant differences between responses from the individual Faculties and the university community. Very few differences were found and have been noted only in the supplementary material on the accompanying CD. The Centre for Academic Integrity also provided us with an comparison of the response frequencies of the UVic population in relation to the average of response frequencies of the other 11 Canadian institutions that took part in the longitudinal study. We accept responsibility for these limitations in the survey and those associated with the resulting analysis of the data, and have been conservative in the interpretation of the findings.
Survey Implementation and Response

Following an extensive campaign to promote the survey and provide assurances of confidentiality and anonymity, the survey Web site was made available during the week of February 2-9, 2004, to any students, instructors, and teaching assistants who wished to participate. The completed electronic questionnaires were sent directly to the research personnel at Rutgers University who removed all identifiers and did a basic analysis of the data (frequency distribution). Altogether 3460 students, 246 instructors and 104 teaching assistants participated in the survey. Based on student enrolment and the number of instructors and teaching assistants on staff at the time of the survey, the response rate was approximately 20 percent for each group – a somewhat higher rate than had been expected given the length of the questionnaire and the nature of the subject.

Consistent with the parameters of the research project as specified by Dr. McCabe, this report does not include specific results for graduate students. There were a limited number of graduate students who responded to the questionnaire and their responses were very similar in distribution to those for UVic undergraduates; therefore the data of any graduate students who did not also identify themselves as a teaching assistant were included in the analysis of the undergraduate data.

The survey respondents represented the wide range of disciplines within UVic. The instructors and students were associated with the nine different faculties offering undergraduate and graduate credit programs (excludes Faculty of Graduate Studies, Division of Continuing Studies, and Division of Medical Sciences), while the teaching assistants represented a more limited cross-section of disciplines (see Table 1).

Table 1
Number of Respondents by UVic Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Instructors</th>
<th>Undergraduate Students</th>
<th>Teaching Assistants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human &amp; Social Development</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Science</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Science</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engineering</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not Indicated</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>246</strong></td>
<td><strong>3463</strong></td>
<td><strong>104</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Academic Integrity (AI) survey consisted mainly of questions that elicited a quantifiable response. There were 3 main sections to this part of the survey:

1. Demographic information (8-9 questions depending on whether it was for faculty, students, or teaching assistants).
2. Questions on perceptions of the academic environment (38 to 40 questions depending on whether it was for faculty, students, or teaching assistants).
3. Reporting of specific behaviours observed, engaged in, and perception of incidence (46 questions).

Three open-ended questions were posed:

1. Why do students and instructors uphold academic integrity or engage in academic misconduct?
2. What roles do you think students, instructors and administrators should play?
3. What other comments would you have about the topic of cheating?

The written responses were subjected to a thematic content analysis.

This printed report provides a general summary of the outcomes from the analysis of the quantitative data and the themes derived from the qualitative comments. The final section in this printed document identifies areas of strengths and areas for improvement, as well as the clear connections and contradictions between the qualitative and quantitative responses and areas in which issues are illuminated by the written comments of the respondents.

**Accompanying CD**

A detailed report on quantitative data is included on the accompanying CD along with Excel files of the data pertaining to your specific Faculty and graphical representation of the response frequencies of all of the respondents in the study.

Also included on the CD is a PowerPoint™ presentation based on the comparison of your Faculty responses in relation to the institution-wide responses. This presentation can be used with members of your academic unit to facilitate discussion on the issue of AI. Excerpts from the spring 2004 LTC newsletter on academic integrity that provide some guidance for actions to address academic misconduct at the academic unit and course levels are included to support your discussion and to prompt the design of educational AI initiatives.

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1 Each report will be personalized for the Deans of each of the nine participating Faculties.
Key Findings Based on the Quantitative Survey Responses

This section of the report presents the key findings arising from the frequency analysis of the responses to the questions on the AI survey that elicited categorical responses. It reflects the perspectives of each of the three groups of respondents: instructors, students, and teaching assistants.

The key findings from the survey are as follows:

- Instructors and teaching assistants reported a higher level of understanding of academic integrity and awareness about policies and penalties than did students. All groups gave relatively low ratings for student support of policies and penalties, effectiveness of policies, and severity of penalties, with the lowest ratings being for student understanding of policies and penalties.

- Faculty members (either as colleagues or as instructors and teaching assistants) and print publications were highly rated as sources for finding out about academic integrity and misconduct guidelines. Information sources that were rated as least useful overall included class discussions, instructor references to Internet sources, assignment instructions, Deans and other administrators, orientation programs, and publicized results of judicial hearings.

- All groups reported that discussion of academic integrity guidelines was most often related to criteria for evaluation of student learning and proper citation of written resources, and least often related to group work or collaboration, and reporting of course research or lab data.

- Discussions of the consequences of academic misconduct were reported to be relatively infrequent and teaching assistants had fewer discussions with their students about consequences than did instructors. When discussions of consequences did occur, they were most often related to plagiarism on written assignments, inappropriate use of papers from the Web, inappropriate sharing in collaborative assignments, and cheating during test or exams. There was very little discussion of the consequences of fabricating or falsifying course research or lab data. This last result reflects the fact that a number of courses in the Humanities, Fine Arts, Law, Education, and Human and Social Development are unlikely to have courses in which there are labs or in which research data is generated. The survey did not include a not applicable response.

- All groups reported a general sense that very little academic misconduct is occurring at UVic; the reporting of observed and admitted cheating behaviours supported this perception. Instructors and teaching assistants noted that only infrequently did they observe the majority of behaviours listed in the questionnaires and, according to the students’ self-reports, students seldom engaged in these behaviours. It should be noted, however, that students consistently reported less frequent engagement in all of the listed behaviours compared to the frequency of observed incidents as reported by instructors and teaching assistants. This may reflect under reporting of negative behaviours, which is not uncommon in these types of surveys.

- The cheating behaviours that were most often observed by instructors and teaching assistants, and self-reported by students were: working on an assignment with others when the instructor had asked for individual work, and copying sentences from either an Internet or written source without footnoting them in a paper. Those that were least often observed included: helping someone else cheat on a test, fabricating or falsifying research or lab data, and turning in a
paper obtained in large part from a term paper mill or Web site. The least common behaviours, according to student self-reports, were: turning in work done by someone else or turning in work from a paper mill or Web site.

- When asked to consider the seriousness of various forms of cheating, instructors rated all of the listed behaviours as relatively serious, while teaching assistants and students consistently gave them as somewhat lower ratings. Behaviours that were considered most serious by all groups were: turning in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper mill or Web site or copied from another student; copying from another student during a test or exam without his or her knowledge; copying material almost word for word from a written source; and using unpermitted crib notes. Behaviours that were considered by students and teaching assistants to be moderate or trivial forms of cheating, and were also rated as relatively less serious by instructors, included: receiving unpermitted help on an assignment; working on an assignment with others when the instructor asked for individual work; fabricating or falsifying a bibliography; and copying a few sentences of material from a written or Internet source without footnoting them in a paper.

- The percentage of respondents who had heard about incidents of cheating on tests or exams (57-61%) was, for each group, at least double the percentage of those reporting that they had observed an incident (18-28%). Although approximately one in five respondents had observed cheating on tests or exams, very few reported that they had observed this more than once.

- Approximately half of the instructors and teaching assistants reported that they had at some time ignored a suspected cheating incident in one of their courses, most often because they lacked evidence or proof, and less frequently because they felt the cheating was trivial. Factors that were least likely to persuade an instructor’s or teaching assistants to ignore a suspected cheating incident included lack of time to pursue the case, concern that the student would suffer, not wanting to deal with it, and lack of support from the administration.

- In contrast to the findings about suspected cheating incidents, both instructors and teaching assistants said that they would likely report an observed cheating incident. All groups thought it likely that a typical instructor or teaching assistant would report cheating. Conversely, all groups thought it unlikely that a typical student would report a cheating incident that he or she had observed, especially if it involved a close friend. This was consistent with the finding that less than five percent of the students had ever reported another student for cheating, even though 28 percent said they had observed another student cheating during a test or exam at UVic.

- Approximately half of the instructors and teaching assistants said they had referred a suspected case of cheating in the past. Approximately two thirds of the instructors who had made a referral said they were satisfied with the outcome, while the others said they felt neutral about or dissatisfied with the outcome.

- A large percentage of instructors and teaching assistants said that, if they were convinced that a student cheated, their most likely reaction would be to report the incident to a higher authority – either the chair, director or dean, if it was an instructor reporting, or the appropriate instructor or laboratory coordinator, if it was a teaching assistant reporting. No teaching assistants and only a very small percentage of instructors said they would do nothing about the incident.
Instructors and teaching assistants said they employed a variety of safeguards to reduce cheating in courses. The most common one used by instructors was changing exams regularly. Other safeguards commonly used by both groups included providing information on the syllabus about cheating and plagiarism, closely monitoring students during exams, discussing the importance of honesty, and reminding students about their obligations. Relatively few instructors or teaching assistants reported handing out different version of an exam as a safeguard against cheating or using the Internet or special software to detect or confirm plagiarism. More teaching assistants than instructors said they did not employ any special safeguards.

All groups shared a number of positive perceptions about the learning environment at UVic. These included the perceptions that:
- there is a general climate of trust and respect,
- honesty and integrity are common values
- difficulty of exams and course work is appropriate and reasonable for year levels and programs, and
- instructors set clear expectations and take responsibility for monitoring student academic misconduct.

There were, however, a number of discrepancies between the groups in their level of agreement with the perception statements. Teaching assistants agreed slightly less with the statement that honesty and integrity are common values at UVic than did instructors and students. Compared to teaching assistants and students, instructors more strongly agreed that their assessments are fair and accurate and help students learn concepts, and that they change their exams and assignments regularly. Instructors also had a more positive perception of their own vigilance in discovering and reporting suspected cases. While students were more likely to disagree with the statement that cheating is a serious problem at UVic, instructors and teaching assistants tended to be “not sure” or to agree.
Key Findings Based on the Qualitative Responses

In this section of the report the key findings that emerged from the numerous comments made by students, instructors and teaching assistants in response to three final questions on the survey are identified. The analysis of the qualitative responses reveals information that reinforces some of the key quantitative findings, contradicts others, and presents insights about the attitudes of these three groups of respondents.

In the survey, the following questions were asked:
1. Why do students uphold academic integrity or engage in academic misconduct?
2. What roles do you think students, instructors and administrators should play?
3. What other comments would you have about the topic of cheating?

Based on the number of respondents who completed the survey, the average response rate to these three questions was notable with 55% offering comments on the first question, 49% on the second question and 24% responding to the last question.

The key findings from the analysis of the responses are as follows:

- All groups mentioned values of integrity and honesty as primary reason why people uphold academic integrity and respondents made many positive comments about the culture of integrity present at the University of Victoria, feelings of respect, fairness and value for the learning process.

- Important to all groups was the fact that many people do not cheat, that the majority are honest and that we should remember to focus on this positive finding.

- Students also expressed that the fear of consequences kept them honest. They perceived that if caught cheating they could fail an assignment, fail a course, or even be expelled from the university.

- All groups identified the pressure to succeed, to get high marks, and to meet unrealistic expectations as factors that lead to academic misconduct. These factors encourage students to take short cuts to learning when they feel stressed, overworked, and short on time to complete assignment, attend classes, etc.

- All groups repeatedly voiced their concern that cheating is too easy to do and get away with, that we are too tolerant of cheaters, and that it is a bigger problem because the message in society is that it is okay to cheat the system because you can get away with it; many respondents felt that individuals at the university were indeed getting away with cheating behaviours and academic misconduct and were reaping the rewards without doing the work; many felt that technology and the internet were making it easier to cheat.

- As for the roles students play in supporting academic integrity, students agreed that they have to take the responsibility for their behaviours but they wanted help and support in order to become better informed about academic integrity.

- Instructors and teaching assistants hoped that students would take a more active role in monitoring and reporting incidents of cheating but students were concerned that there be a
confidential and anonymous reporting system if they were going to do this and many did not like the idea of policing their peers.

- All groups clearly felt that the role of the instructor was to educate students about academic integrity and that they should communicate openly, honestly, and with clarity about academic integrity, misconduct, the rules, the guidelines, and the consequences.

- All groups also expressed a concern that instructors need to be more vigilant in their efforts to prevent cheating in classrooms, labs, examinations, on papers, essays, and on assignments; they suggested that instructors monitor student activities, discuss problems when they happened, and ensure that rules enforced and consequences applied.

- All groups, but especially students and teaching assistants, identified the need for instructors to be more creative in their design of assessment as a way to prevent academic misconduct.

- All groups clearly expressed that the main role of administration was ensure that there were clear and consistent policies across all Faculties and departments; many found the different standards and expectations across campus classrooms and labs confusing and frustrating.

- Instructors stated very clearly that they needed more support from their administrators. Many commented that they were reluctant to bring cases of misconduct forward because when they had in past, they were not believed, the situation was minimized, the penalties were reduced without consultation, students were given the benefit of the doubt, or evidence of cheating was never considered sufficient.

- Students felt removed from administration and so did not see them as monitors but they also expressed that administrators should be involved in supporting students and instructors in ways that would help to minimize or eliminate cheating. They identified smaller classes as an important solution so instructor could get to know them better, provide resources, and mediate conflicts.

- Teaching assistants also raised the idea of having instructors connect with students by giving priority to teaching over research or other activities, and having smaller classes.

The following three tables identify the dominant themes that emerged from the qualitative responses of each of the constituent groups to the three questions.
Table 2
Common Themes Based on Comments from Instructors, Students, and Teaching Assistants to Open-ended Question 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Student Themes</th>
<th>Instructor Themes</th>
<th>Teaching Assistant Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why do students uphold academic integrity?</td>
<td>Personal integrity and values</td>
<td>Majority are honest and don’t cheat</td>
<td>Value system-quality of people Reputation-UVic as a quality institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Culture of integrity</td>
<td>Mutual respect and fairness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear of consequences</td>
<td>Focus on learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do students engage in academic misconduct?</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>Pressure to succeed and expectations of others</td>
<td>Short cuts to learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ease of cheating</td>
<td>Tolerance for cheating-societal problem</td>
<td>Tolerance for cheating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of communication on guidelines and consequences</td>
<td>Short cuts to learning</td>
<td>Pressure to succeed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3  
Common Themes Based on Comments from Instructors, Students and Teaching Assistants to Open-ended Question 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Student Response Themes</th>
<th>Instructor Response Themes</th>
<th>Teaching Assistant Response Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What role should STUDENTS play in supporting academic integrity?</td>
<td>Take personal responsible for own integrity</td>
<td>Monitor and report incidents of cheating</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report misconduct if assured of anonymity</td>
<td>Model academic integrity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Become More Aware</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What role should INSTRUCTORS play in supporting academic integrity?</td>
<td>Communicate with clarity</td>
<td>Educate everyone</td>
<td>Educate for awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role model</td>
<td>Be consistently vigilant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be vigilant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enforce the rules</td>
<td>Model academic integrity in classrooms and labs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assess learning in a valid and creative manner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What role should ADMINISTRATORS play in supporting academic integrity?</td>
<td>As an objective arm</td>
<td>Set clear and consistent policies</td>
<td>Set clear and consistent policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide support</td>
<td>Support instructors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Educate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4
Common Themes Based on Comments from Instructors, Students and Teaching Assistants to Open-ended Question 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Student Response Themes</th>
<th>Instructor Response Themes</th>
<th>Teaching Assistant Response Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other additional comments about the topic of academic integrity</td>
<td>Improve the conditions for learning</td>
<td>Create the culture</td>
<td>Reconnect with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student rights must be maintained</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cheat-proof assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concern about what was NOT on survey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Comments About The Topic of Academic Integrity
What to Celebrate, Where to Improve and Cross Connections Between Qualitative and Quantitative Results

This section is organized by categories of questions in the survey, highlighting the areas of strength and areas for improvement. Cross connections between the main quantitative results and the qualitative responses are reported and although this helps to clarify some of the quantitative findings, there are also some contradictions between these two data sources.

I. Awareness and Understanding of Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policies and Penalties
II. Sources of Information About Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Guidelines
III. Discussion of Guidelines and Consequences
IV. Frequency of Academic Misconduct
V. Cheating on Tests or Examinations and in Courses
VI. Perceived Seriousness of Academic Misconduct
VII. Reactions to and Reporting of Cheating
VIII. Safeguards to Reduce Cheating
IX. Perceptions of the Learning Environment at UVic
I. Awareness and Understanding of Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policies and Penalties

*Celebrate that …* Instructors said they had high levels of understanding of academic integrity and awareness of policies and penalties, and students and teaching assistants concurred with this assessment.

*Areas for improvement …* All groups gave relatively low ratings for student support of policies and penalties, effectiveness of policies, and severity of penalties. Student understanding of policies and penalties was rated lowest by all groups.

*Cross connections …* This survey appears to have raised awareness among respondents about academic integrity, but the results also reveal interdepartmental inconsistencies in information and the need for additional resources. Instructors, students and teaching assistants all commented that the main role of the administration should be to ensure that there are clear policies that are consistent across all Faculties. Many respondents noted that the variation in standards and expectations between classrooms or labs was confusing and frustrating. Students commented on their own need to become more aware of academic integrity issues and processes, including consequences of misconduct.

![Figure 1. Students’ perception of their understanding of AI](image-url)

Figure 1. Students’ perception of their understanding of AI
II. Sources of Information About Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Guidelines

*Celebrate that …* Instructors (either as colleagues or as instructors and teaching assistants) and print publications were highly rated as sources for finding out about academic integrity and misconduct guidelines. The top sources identified by instructors were the university calendar, other instructors, and the department chair; for students they were instructors, the course syllabus, and the university calendar; and for teaching assistants they were instructor, other teaching assistants, and the course syllabus.

*Where to improve …* The university calendar appears to be a less important source of guidelines information for teaching assistants than for instructors and students. Information sources that were rated as least useful overall included class discussions, instructor references to Internet sources, assignment instructions, deans and other administrators, orientation programs, and publicized results of judicial hearings.

*Cross connections …* Students expressed a desire to have academic integrity and academic misconduct guidelines frequently and openly discussed in their classes and labs, and highlighted in the syllabi and on assignments. They wanted more emphasis on these issues in the early years of their programs. They also said it should not be assumed that they are knowledgeable about these issues, about which many said they feel naïve, inexperienced, or unprepared.

![Figure 2. Sources for information on AI as reported by students.](image-url)
III. Discussion of Guidelines and Consequences

*Celebrate that* … All groups reported some discussion of academic integrity guidelines related to criteria for evaluation of student learning and proper citation of written resources. Each group also reported some discussion of other guidelines, including those related to independent work, proper citation of Internet sources, and reporting of lab data, but they varied in their assessments of how often these discussions took place.

While discussions of consequences were reported to be relatively infrequent, instructors and students said that when they did occur they were most often related to plagiarism on written assignments, inappropriate use of papers from the Web, inappropriate sharing in collaborative assignments and cheating during test or exams.

*Where to improve* … Guidelines that were discussed least often were those related to group work or collaboration, and reporting of course research or lab data. All groups reported very little discussion of the consequences of fabricating or falsifying course research or lab data. Teaching assistants had fewer discussions with their students about the consequences of academic misconduct than did instructors.

*Cross connections* … Students said they wanted information and clarity on many different topics including definitions, guidelines, rules and regulations, referencing for research and assignments, consequences for certain behaviours, and how to produce work in groups without jeopardizing themselves and others. Specifically, they would like instructors to provide clear, consistent information and resources about academic integrity issues, to explain what cheating is, to outline their expectations in regard to assignments, referencing, and group work, and to discuss the consequences of misconduct. Students also said they would appreciate more support, understanding, and empathy from instructors during stressful or difficult times. A number of students saw the instructor’s role as an enforcer of rules and policies; the instructor should be able to prevent cheating by being strict on this issue by reporting and following up on incidents of misconduct, and applying appropriate consequences and penalties.

Instructors commented that one of the main roles of the administration is to consult with instructors on academic integrity policies and to provide a framework for establishing guidelines and standards that clearly and explicitly outline rules, penalties, and consequences, and to ensure that these are consistent across departments.

All groups clearly felt that the main role for instructors is to educate by communicating clearly, openly, and honestly about all aspects of academic integrity and misconduct, including rules, guidelines, and consequences.

Teaching assistants said they felt pressured to establish an atmosphere of trust with students, which was at odds with the need to monitor papers and assignments for plagiarism and report offenders; they also said that large classes made this balancing act more difficult. Teaching assistants wished that instructors were more involved with students in the following ways: providing information about referencing, proper citations, rules, regulations, and consequences; engaging students in discussions about their papers and assignments; clarifying expectations for class and lab work with concrete examples; monitoring classroom and examination behaviour; reporting misconduct; and applying penalties.
Figure 3. Student report of the number of instructors who discuss AI guidelines.
IV. Frequency of Academic Misconduct

_Celebrate that_ … All groups reported a general sense that very little academic misconduct is occurring at UVic and this perception was supported by the respondents’ report on observed and actual cheating behaviours. According to the students’ self-reports, students infrequently engaged in the majority of behaviours listed in the questionnaires and these behaviours had been seldom observed by instructors and teaching assistants.

All groups reported a general sense that fabricating or falsifying course research or lab data, and cheating during tests or exams were relatively uncommon occurrences at UVic.

Behaviours that instructors observed least often included helping someone else cheat on a test, and fabricating or falsifying research or lab data. The behaviour least often observed by teaching assistants was a student turning in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper mill or Web site. Both groups also rate the use of unpermitted crib notes during a test and the catch-all category of “cheating on a test in any other way” as very infrequently observed behaviours.

Behaviours that students reported engaging in least often included: turning in work done by someone else or from a paper mill or Web site; copying material word for word from a written source and turning it in as their own work; copying from another student during a test with or without his or her knowledge; limiting other students’ access to reserved course materials; helping someone cheat on a test; using unpermitted crib notes; handing in the same work twice for credit; and using a false excuse to obtain an extension on an assignment.

_Where to improve_ … In terms of the respondents’ general sense of the academic integrity environment at UVic, the types of academic misconduct thought to be more common by all groups included inappropriate sharing in collaborative assignments, plagiarism on written assignments, and inappropriate use of papers from the Web.

Cheating behaviours that were most often observed by instructors and teaching assistants were working on an assignment with others when the instructor had asked for individual work, and copying sentences from either an Internet or written source without footnoting them in a paper. These were also among the behaviours in which students reported that they most often engaged. It should be noted that students consistently reported less frequent engagement in all of the listed behaviours compared to the frequency of observed incidents as reported by instructors and teaching assistants.

_Cross connections_ … All groups commented that academic misconduct occurs because of pressures to succeed, to get high marks, and meet unrealistic expectations. These conditions lead students to resort to shortcuts to learning when they feel stressed, depressed, overworked, unable to cope, and short of time to meet deadlines. Students said they are deterred from cheating by the fear of consequences, including concern about failing a course or assignment or getting expelled from the university.

Many of the written comments made by instructors, students and teaching assistants referred to a wide variety of types of academic misconduct and reasons why students engage in these behaviours, suggesting a greater frequency of misconduct than was indicated by the questions about observing and engaging in specific behaviours. One explanation for this apparent contradiction might be that accurate self-reporting of engagement in behaviours by students
was limited by concerns about anonymity, despite assurances that all identifiers would be removed from the survey results. Since all groups reported that they had heard about more incidents of academic misconduct than they actually observed or engaged in, another possible explanation is that the comments reflected general perceptions based on secondary sources rather than the respondents’ personal experience at UVic. To a lesser extent, variations in the wording of survey questions also might have contributed to the lack of consistent results.

Figure 4. The perception of students, instructors, and TA of the frequency of plagiarism at UVic.
V. Cheating on Tests or Examinations and in Courses

_Celebrate that …_ Observations of cheating on tests or exams were not common; most respondents from all groups had either never or only once witnessed such an incident. Factors that were least likely to influence an instructor’s decision to ignore a suspected cheating incident were: lack of time to pursue the case; concern that the student would suffer; not wanting to deal with it; and lack of support from the administration. Factors that were least likely to influence a teaching assistants decision to ignore were: not wanting to deal with it; lack of support from the instructor or the administration; being told by the lab coordinator to ignore the incident; lack of time to pursue the case; and concern that the student would suffer.

_Where to improve …_ The percentage of respondents who had heard about incidents of cheating on tests or exams was, for each group, at least double the percentage who had observed an incident. Approximately half of the instructors and teaching assistants reported that they had ignored a suspected cheating incident in one of their courses. The factor that most often influenced the decision to disregard the incident was that they lacked evidence or proof. The next most significant factors that influenced their decisions were the perception that the cheating was trivial and, in the case of teaching assistants, being told by the instructor to ignore the incident.

_Cross connections …_ Many students mentioned exam writing as a situation in which cheating was likely to occur and gave examples to illustrate their points. They said they expect instructor to monitor student behaviour during exams and pay closer attention to other forms of cheating behaviours by becoming more familiar with Web sites in order to anticipate potential problems. Students referred to a number of factors that they thought facilitated cheating, including: examinations in large classes with few invigilators to supervise and monitor; re-use of exams; passing of assignments from one student to another; and the widespread availability of technologies that provide a means to cheat, such as programmable calculators and the Internet.

Respondents from all groups were concerned that it is too easy to engage in and get away with cheating and that there is too much tolerance of cheaters; some said this is a bigger problem because of societal beliefs that “it is okay to cheat the system because you can get away with it.” Many felt that individuals at the university were indeed getting away with academic misconduct and reaping rewards without doing the work. Many also said that technology and the Internet are making it easier to cheat.
Figure 5. Percentage of Instructors, Students, and TAs Who Observed and Heard About Cheating During Tests or Exams at UVic, and Who Ignored Suspected Cheating in a Course.
VI. Perceived Seriousness of Academic Misconduct

*Celebrate that …* Instructors gave moderate to serious ratings for all of the listed types of academic misconduct. Behaviours that were considered most serious by all groups were: turning in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper mill or Web site or copied from another student; copying from another student during a test or exam without his or her knowing it; copying material almost word for word from a written source; and using unpermitted crib notes. Instructors also considered helping someone else cheat on a test and fabricating or falsifying research data to be relatively serious forms of cheating.

*Where to improve …* Instructors rated most forms of cheating as more serious than did students and teaching assistants. Behaviours considered by students and teaching assistants to be moderate or trivial forms of cheating included: receiving unpermitted help on an assignment; working on an assignment with others when the instructor asked for individual work; fabricating or falsifying a bibliography; and copying a few sentences of material from a written or Internet source without footnoting them in a paper. All of these behaviours, as well as using a false excuse to obtain an extension on due date, were also rated as less serious forms of cheating by instructors.

![Figure 6. Reported frequency of inappropriate collaboration and perception of the seriousness of this form of academic misconduct.](image-url)
VII. Reactions to and Reporting of Cheating

*Celebrate that …* All groups agreed that a typical instructor or teaching assistant would likely report an incident of cheating. Instructors and teaching assistants also said that they personally, were likely to report cheating. Approximately half of the instructors and teaching assistants said they had referred a suspected case of cheating in the past. Instructors reported a fairly high level of satisfaction with the outcome of the referral process: approximately two thirds of those who had referred a suspected case of cheating said they were satisfied with the outcome.

A large percentage of both instructors and teaching assistants said that if they were convinced that a student had cheated, their most likely reaction would be to report the incident to a higher authority – either the chair, director or dean, if it was an instructor reporting, or the appropriate instructor or laboratory coordinator, if it was a teaching assistant reporting. Other reactions reported as likely by a fairly high percentage of the respondents in both groups included failing the student on the test or assignment, and reprimanding or warning the student. Instructors were more likely than teaching assistants to have the student redo the assignment. No teaching assistant and only a very small percentage of instructors said they would do nothing about the incident.

*Where to improve …* All groups said it was unlikely that a typical student would report a cheating incident, especially if it involved a close friend. This was consistent with the finding that less than five percent of the students had ever reported another student for cheating, even though 28 percent said they had observed another student cheating during a test or exam at UVic.

Nearly one third of instructors who had referred a suspected case of cheating said they felt neutral about or dissatisfied with the outcome.

*Cross connections…* Instructors expressed concerns that cheating is difficult to prevent for a number of reasons including: society condones cheating at various levels; students see other students cheat and let them get away with it; colleagues see each other behaving inappropriately; consequences and penalties are so slight or nonexistent that the benefits of cheating and misconduct outweigh the risks; and instructors may fear confrontation or retaliation in the form of poor student course evaluations, feel they require proof beyond a shadow of doubt, or feel unsupported by the administration. Instructors said that dealing with cases of academic misconduct is time-consuming and unpleasant, sometimes even humiliating. Many said they agonized over confronting students whom they suspect of plagiarism or cheating. When they did report cases, they felt the administrators tended to side with the students thereby undercutting their efforts to uphold academic integrity in their classrooms and labs. Instructors expressed concern that the work they do to bring suspected cases of cheating to the administration is trivialized when students are given the benefit of doubt, evidence of academic misconduct is considered insignificant, or penalties are withdrawn or reduced without instructor consultation. They expressed a need for more support from the administration to hold students accountable for their actions and more respect for instructor decisions and disciplinary measures.

Some student comments contrasted with the results of the main survey in which only five percent of students said they had ever reported another student for cheating, and students mostly disagreed or were neutral when asked if they should be responsible for monitoring
other students. Anecdotally, many students commented that their role in upholding academic integrity should include reporting academic misconduct by their peers. However, some disagreed and expressed reluctance to play a role in policing or “ratting on” other students. Those who were in favour of this role expressed concerns about understanding the reporting process and feeling certain that it is confidential and anonymous and that they would be supported by their instructors. Instructors and teaching assistants said they hoped that students would take a more active role in monitoring and reporting cheating incidents.

Figure 7. Report of students, instructors, and TAs as to the likelihood of reporting an observed incidence of academic misconduct.
Figure 8. Percentage of Instructors and TAs Who Had Referred a Suspected Case of Cheating

Figure 9. Instructor Satisfaction With Referral Outcomes
VIII. Safeguards to Reduce Cheating

Celebrate that … Instructors and teaching assistants reported using a number of different strategies to reduce cheating in courses. The strategies most often employ by instructors included changing exams regularly, providing information on the syllabus about cheating and plagiarism, closely monitoring students during exams, discussing the importance of honesty, and reminding students about their obligations. Teaching assistants largely used the same safeguards, with the exception of changing exams regularly, most likely because this did not fall within their area of responsibility.

Where to improve … Relatively few instructors or teaching assistants reported handing out different version of an exam as a safeguard against cheating or using the Internet or special software to detect or confirm plagiarism. The latter result is consistent with other data showing that few UVic instructors currently use TurnItIn software to detect plagiarism. Those instructors who are using this software generally agree that this software or something similar should be among the many tools used to uncover and prevent misconduct.

Cross connections … Consistent with responses from the other two groups, instructors said they should be more involved in monitoring classrooms, laboratories, assignments, and examinations, should take greater responsibility for detecting and preventing plagiarism and other types of academic misconduct, and should take action by reporting cheating incidents, consistently enforcing guidelines, applying penalties, and following up on cases. Instructor comments emphasized the importance of creating a culture of academic integrity through a proactive approach of fostering awareness of academic integrity issues, open discussion, and collaboration between all groups in setting standards, balanced by vigilant monitoring and consistent application of consequences.

All groups, but especially students and teaching assistants, mentioned the need for instructors to be more creative in designing assessment tools to measure learning and to prevent academic misconduct. They commented on the importance of designing relevant and manageable assignments that make it difficult or impossible for students to cheat. They cautioned against the use of take-home exams and suggested that if assignments and lab projects or experiments were changed more regularly and required original and independent thinking this would reduce the temptation for students to cheat. Other safeguards mentioned included: ensuring that alternate forms of tests are available, especially in classes where students are seated close together; having students submit draft assignments for review; and providing detailed feedback (that reflects a fair assessment of student performance) on student work.

Teaching assistants commented that student accountability should include playing an active role in the learning process, becoming informed about academic integrity, learning the rules regarding original work, and supporting integrity and honesty. They also felt that instructors needed to connect with students by giving priority to teaching over research or other activities, and by having smaller classes. Many students said they wanted help to become better informed about academic integrity issues. They also expressed a desire for the administration to support students and instructors in ways that would help to minimize or eliminate cheating, such as having smaller classes so instructor could get to know students better, providing resources, and mediating the resolution of conflicts.
Celebrate that … All groups shared a number of positive perceptions about the learning environment at UVic, including that there is a general climate of trust and respect, that honesty and integrity are common values, that difficulty of exams and course work is appropriate and reasonable for year levels and programs, and that instructors set clear expectations and take responsibility for monitoring student academic misconduct.

Where to improve … There were a number of discrepancies between the groups in their level of agreement with the perception statements. Teaching assistants agreed slightly less with the statement that honesty and integrity are common values at UVic than did instructors and students. Compared to teaching assistants and students, instructors more strongly agreed that their assessments are fair and accurate and help students learn concepts, and that they change their exams and assignments regularly. Instructors also had a more positive perception of their own vigilance in discovering and reporting suspected cases; student and teaching assistant responses mostly fell in the “not sure” range. While students were more likely to disagree that cheating is a serious problem at UVic, instructors and teaching assistants tended to be “not sure” or to agree.

Cross connections … Respondents from all groups made many positive comments about UVic’s culture of integrity and atmosphere of respect, fairness, and esteem for the learning process. They also stressed that many people do not cheat, that the majority of individuals are honest, and that we should remember to focus on this positive finding.
Many instructors commented that they had not witnessed any cheating in all of their years at UVic, and that there is an environment of mutual respect, a sense of fairness, and a level playing field on campus. They also said they did not want to send the message that they mistrusted students or colleagues.

Students cited the campus culture of integrity as one of the key reasons why they uphold academic integrity. They also commented extensively on their own sense of integrity and personal values, and said that students who value academic integrity and care about learning do so because of the way they were raised, their experiences in school, their own personal standards for behaviour, their interest in learning, and their general desire for a good education. Students said they felt confident that their work was fairly graded, that their ideas were respected, and they were trusted and respected for their honesty, effort, and hard work by instructor and peers. Contributing to this sense of cohesion and academic success were their feelings of engagement with their studies, commitment to learning for the sake of learning, and confidence that their degrees would be favourably recognized.

Figure 11 Perception of students, instructors, and TAs that honesty and integrity are common values at UVic.
Conclusions and General Recommendations

Despite our original concerns about the design flaws in the survey and the relatively basic statistical analysis of quantitative data, the results of the survey are informative. This information may be used by the senior administration, the Deans of the Faculties and Departmental Chairs and Directors to engage all interested members of our academic community in discussions of academic integrity and misconduct, to identify strategies for increasing awareness and understanding of guidelines and consequences, and assess what resources and support are needed to maintain and enhance the ideals that create quality learning environments at the University of Victoria.

Based on the results of the survey, it is recommended that:

- The University of Victoria acknowledge the majority of students, instructors and teaching assistants who uphold academic integrity in their academic work and are ultimately responsible for the favourable reputation of the institution.

- Senior administrators along with Deans review the existing policies university and Faculty policies to ensure clear, and consistent messages about academic integrity and academic misconduct.

- The University of Victoria undertakes an educational awareness campaign within the university community on all aspects of academic integrity and misconduct and in particular efforts should be made to make students aware of academic integrity standards in their orientation.

- Deans in collaboration with Chairs/Directors and members of academic units collaborate to develop procedures and resources so that students in each course are made aware of the academic standards of that area of study and given the resources with which to learn the particular conventions of research and publication.

- Deans in collaboration with Chairs/Directors encourage and support professional development across Faculties and Departments on the design of instruction and assessment that promotes student learning and prevents academic misconduct.