

## University of Georgia Academic Honesty Survey Spring 2007

### Introduction

During spring semester 2007, a web-based survey (attached) was distributed to all faculty, teaching assistants, and a random sample of undergraduate and graduate students to assess the academic honesty climate and the process for responding to academic dishonesty at the University of Georgia. The survey, based on a national survey of college students developed by Dr. Don McCabe (Rutgers University) and the Center for Academic Integrity, was amended adequately to assess our unique system for responding to possible academic dishonesty.

No unique, personal identifier was requested or captured by the survey. Responses from participants were collected by Dr. McCabe for analysis as a part of his national survey and returned to the University for our use in assessing the effectiveness of UGA's process for resolving possible academic dishonesty and to provide valuable information for use in academic honesty education.

### Demographics of Respondents

	Sent Survey	Responded	Response Rate	Typical US Response Rate*
Faculty	1454	576	40%	25%
Undergraduate Students	5388	937	17%	15%
1 <sup>st</sup> Year	1444	322	22%	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year	1036	187	18%	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year	1448	228	16%	
4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Year	1460	200	14%	

\* According to Dr. McCabe in an e-mail of May 19, 2008

- Of the students who responded to the survey, 68% were female and 31% male. The average self-reported GPA was 2.49-3.50.
- 36% of the faculty members who responded were female and 61% male. 68% reported being tenured.

### Survey Highlights

#### *“A Culture of Honesty,” Policy & Procedures*

Results of the survey indicate that the University's academic honesty policy and expectations are well known, that the University community values academic honesty, and that UGA's Facilitated Discussion model for resolving possible academic dishonesty is considered fair and educational.

- Both students (97%) and faculty (88%) believe it is important to be honest.

- 98% of students and 79% of faculty members agree that UGA values academic honesty.
- The vast majority of students (87%) and faculty (91%) report being informed about the University's academic honesty policy and procedures, "*A Culture of Honesty*."
- 57% of UGA undergraduates and 58 % of faculty respondents agreed that the University's academic honesty process was fair and educational (about 1/3 of the respondents were unsure).
- Of the faculty members who indicated they have referred a case of suspected dishonesty to the Office of the Vice President for Instruction, 64% answered that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the outcome. Although lower than we would like, this percent reflects faculty who reported possible violations under both our old (formal and legalistic) model and our current Facilitated Discussion model.

Much of the survey data collected indicates that UGA students and faculty regarding academic integrity are similar to their national peers. For example, in response to a question about the effectiveness of the institution's academic integrity process, 79% of UGA students reported that the policy at UGA is *medium-very highly effective* in comparison to 78% of their US counterparts. Likewise, 56% UGA faculty responded that the policy at UGA is *medium to highly effective* compared to 55% of faculty from other US institutions.

### ***Prevention and Behaviors Related to Academic Dishonesty***

The survey indicates that faculty members play a vital role in educating students about academic honesty and that instructors learn about the University's policy and expectations from the honesty web page ([www.uga.edu/honesty](http://www.uga.edu/honesty)), deans and department heads. This information is important to the University's campaign on honesty education.

- 53% of students report learning a lot about the policy from faculty and 55% of students from First-Year Orientation. Faculty on the other hand report knowledge about "*A Culture of Honesty*" coming from the Office of the Vice President for Instruction's honesty webpage and deans and department heads.
- 45 % of faculty and 44% of students responded that they were unsure of whether cheating is a serious problem at UGA compared to 42% of faculty and 47% of students from other institutions.
- While 51% of UGA students reported that they never have seen another student cheating and 79% responded that it is unlikely that they would report a close friend for academic dishonesty, 68% would encourage a peer to be academically honest.

Students and faculty were asked to evaluate a series of behaviors by reporting which of the activities the student had engaged in or the faculty member had witnessed and then, the degree of severity of each of these behaviors.

- 51% of UGA student respondents self-reported performing at least 1 behavior which is considered a serious violation of "*A Culture of Honesty*" in the past year. This compares to 65% of students from other institutions responding to the same categories of dishonesty.

The top five dishonest actions which UGA students self-reported are:

1. Working with others when asked to do individual work (34%)
2. Getting questions and answers from someone who has already taken the test (27%)
3. Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment (21%)
4. Copying from an electronic source without footnoting (21%)
5. Copying a few sentences from a written source without citing (19%)

When asked about reporting possible academic dishonesty to the Office of the Vice President for Instruction, 45% of UGA faculty respondents reported ignoring an incident of cheating and of those, 27% ignored the matter due to lack of proof or because they believed the cheating was trivial.

UGA students and faculty reported significant differences of opinion related to acts of trivial cheating. Survey participants were asked about the seriousness of certain behaviors. Both groups responded that certain behaviors were trivial; however students reported at a much greater percentage the acts being “trivial or not cheating.”

<b><i>Behaviors - Trivial or Not Cheating</i></b>	<b><i>UGA Students</i></b>	<b><i>UGA Faculty</i></b>
Working with others electronically on individual work	60%	11%
Working with others when asked for individual work	59%	14%
Submitting the same work twice for credit in different courses	52%	20%
Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography	38%	12%
Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment	35%	9%
Copying another student’s homework	35%	6%
Copying a few sentences from a written source without citing	31%	15%
Copying from an electronic source without footnoting	31%	16%
Using a false excuse to obtain an extension	28%	15%

## **Conclusion**

For the most part, it appears that University of Georgia students are much like their national peers, that academic dishonesty is not an epidemic at UGA, but that continued discussion from all members of the University community will move us closer to the creation of “*A Culture of Honesty.*”

We plan to continue to examine the results of the survey to provide the Office of the Vice President for Instruction with direction for campus-wide academic honesty education. In addition, this survey or a similar revised survey should be conducted in 2010. The University of Georgia will benefit from continued examination of our policy and procedures and discussion about the importance of academic integrity and support of the policy. Questions, comments, and feedback about this report may be directed to Deborah Bell, Coordinator for Academic Honesty at (706) 542-4336 or [honesty@uga.edu](mailto:honesty@uga.edu).