

student know that you are going to report the matter to the Dean of Students, who will contact the student later. (Note: You are not obliged to consult with the student before notifying the Dean; but if you suspect plagiarism, you are encouraged to do so).

What if there isn't much proof initially, but you're convinced the paper is plagiarized? The Dean's office urges instructors to exercise their professional judgment about whether a suspicious paper warrants investigation. If you cannot find the original source to compare with the student's work, consider asking him/her outright if the paper is his/hers original work. Many students are quick to admit a "mistake."

If the student maintains that the work is original, consider asking him/her to discuss the use of sources and methodology; and to define and explain words or concepts used within the work. The student's inability to respond correctly may indicate that those sections were plagiarized. You might also ask to see the student's rough draft and notes for the paper, and compare those (if they are produced) to the final product.

You might elect to warn the student or refer the case to the Dean of Students, or give the student the option of rewriting the paper. Disciplinary grades are not permitted by the Los Angeles Division of the Academic Senate.

1. Talk with the student. It's probably best not to begin by accusing the student of plagiarism - that may provoke a belligerence from a guilty student or inspire confusion in a naive student. Instead, indicate what the evidence is and ask the student to explain how she or he wrote the paper. You may use the word "plagiarism" when conferring with the student, although you may find that s/he interprets the concept differently than you do. You should also let the

Suppose you're reading a student's paper and suddenly are reminded of an article from last week's Time. After checking the Time issue, you see that much of the student's paper was copied directly from the magazine without quotation, documentation, or other attribution of the source. What should you do?

### Standard Disciplinary Procedure:

A student's decision to complete an assignment by plagiarizing is one of the ugliest experiences an instructor can face. Despite the inevitable unpleasantness of student plagiarism, however, instructors may take some comfort in knowing that the University not only outlines an official procedure for handling plagiarism, but also recognizes the unique contours of each case.

### Confronting Plagiarism:

Don't hesitate to pursue any plagiarism that occurs in your class.

The majority of students, who do not plagiarize, will appreciate your action.

For more information on the prevention and detection of plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty,

please contact:

*The Dean of Students' Office  
1206 Murphy Hall  
825-3871*

## Confronting Plagiarism:

*A guide for Instructors to  
UCLA policies*

Prepared by:  
the Office of the Dean of Students

with the assistance of Sonia Maasik,  
UCLA Writing Programs

June, 1992

2. Assign a grade of "DR." Should the incident come to our attention during the time that a final grade is due, you should assign a grade of "DR" (deferred report). You should let the student know that you have assigned this temporary grade. A "DR" isn't permanent and does not "hurt" the student's record. The grade report will be changed once the case is resolved.

3. Send your documentation to the Dean of Students' Office. (1206 Murphy Hall, 825-3871). This task is not meant to create additional work for you. It will expedite the disposition of the case if you include: copies of the plagiarized assignment and the original source(s), (if possible, it will help if you indicate on the copies which are the plagiarized passages) and a written statement of the facts of the incident, including an account of your conversation(s) with the student. The Dean of Students will review all incoming case materials.

4. The Dean handling the case will contact you and will send the student a summons letter outlining the specific charges, and include two brochures describing UCLA conduct policies and procedures. Normally, during the first counseling session with the Dean, the student will be asked if s/he understands the conduct regulations as issue and the documents relevant to the charge of plagiarism. The student will have the opportunity to relate his/her understanding of how the paper

was written. The Dean and student will probably meet several times to determine questions of premeditation, deliberation, and sanctions.

5. The Dean will decide on the appropriate sanction. Every effort will be made to consult with you again, prior to the sanction becoming official. Sanctions range from a written Warning to Suspension and Dismissal; often, students are required, as part of conditions of continued enrollment, to complete unpaid community service hours such as working in the Center for the Health Sciences, or to participate in an individualized tutoring program to address academic deficiencies. The Dean will administer these sanctions and discuss with you the calculation of the grade to replace the DR.

The rare case: In a few cases, the Dean may not be able to resolve the issue. Typically, this happens if the student continues to deny the allegations and there is reason to believe that plagiarism did occur. The case is then referred to the Student Conduct Committee, composed of two faculty, two students, and a staff member. The Committee (or Hearing Officer) hears the case and makes recommendations to the Chancellor. The Chancellor then makes the final decision.

Can Plagiarism be prevented? No assignment can be guaranteed plagiarism-proof, but Instructors can take steps not only to confront, but also to prevent plagiarism. We may not eliminate it, but we can make students think twice.

### Strategies to prevent plagiarism:

1. Define plagiarism for each course, each quarter. Include a definition in the syllabus and give students notice that you expect them to follow standard principles of citation and attribution (they may not know what those are). You might refer them to the Style Sheet, a pamphlet published by the Department of English, for a workable definition of plagiarism.

2. Make your assignment expectations explicit. The student should know what you expect in the way of citations, and precisely what collaboration with fellow students, if any, is permitted.

3. Ask for all papers to be handed in with rough drafts. You might also assign deadlines by which students must submit evidence of progress on assignments.

4. Assign paper topics that are specific or are likely to require original research. If specific topics are not possible, and if you have a large class, consider photocopying the first page of each term paper submitted so that:

a) they may be cross-checked, within the same class, for duplicate submissions; and

b) you may compare these with the papers submitted in later academic terms.

5. Require students to present oral reports on a particular paper. It is very difficult to give an adequate oral report on a paper one hasn't written.

6. Be aware that several local companies offer pre-written, and custom written term papers for sale. Indicators of purchased papers are often unusual or outdated references, and a thesis that marginally addresses the assignment (for example, the paper makes reference to characters, events, concepts, or works not discussed in class). If you suspect such a paper, please consult with the Dean of Students' Office.

- Make students aware of the resources available to them if they are having difficulty with the material.
  - Your office hours/general availability.
  - College Tutorials, 228 Griffin Commons, 206-1491 (Math skills, 1-1 tutoring, writing skills).
  - Special help sessions which you or your staff may offer.
  - Resources like Student Psychological Services, Stress Management Classes and those listed on our sample syllabus attachment (contact the DOS for more information).
- Preparing Your Exam: Preventive measures**
1. Even if you are disinclined to have completely different sets of questions for one exam, some disincentive for cheating is developed merely by:
    - Printing the same page on different colored paper so that it appears that the pages are in a different order.
    - Collating the exam pages in different orders (Page 2 before Page 1, etc.).
    - Mixing up the order of the questions on a given page.
- be sure to adjust the answer key accordingly.

- The thought that some students cheat on an exam is an unpleasant one; however, at UCLA, it is not just a thought, it is a fact. Students cheat; however, there are steps faculty can take to reduce the likelihood that a person will cheat, and to catch the student who does cheat.
- Preparing Your Students:**
1. Be sure you state, preferably in writing and well in advance of an exam, your expectations for academic behavior. (See our sample syllabus attachment, available from the Dean of Students, for ideas). For example, let students know whether any materials will be allowed in the exam room; whether collaboration is permitted and what that includes; whether picture I.D.'s or blue books will be required; if texts are allowed, whether writing in the text or marking pages will be allowed; whether students may enter or leave the room while the exam is in progress. While it is the student's responsibility to ask if s/he is unsure of your expectations, chances are good that if a behavior is not clearly prohibited, a student will assume that it will be allowed.
  2. Discuss the consequences of violating your expectations. You need not scare students, but many students are unaware that cheating may result in Suspension or Dismissal from the University.

*"When on an examination or other work submitted by a student, the student is suspected of having engaged in plagiarism or other wise having cheated, the suspected infraction is to be reported to the appropriate administrative office ... for consideration of disciplinary proceeding against the student." (The Manual of the Los Angeles Division of the Academic Senate, Oct. 1984)*

For more information on the judicial procedure for cheating or plagiarism, please refer to either:

**UCLA Student Conduct Code: Policies and Procedures**

or

**"Confronting Plagiarism: An Instructors Guide to UCLA Policies"**

Both brochures and more information are available from:

**The Dean of Students' Office  
1206 Murphy Hall  
825-3871**

**cheating: (chēt'ing) n**

flimflam, rook, swindle, uncool

*A guide for Instructors to*

*UCLA Policies*

**Prepared by the Office of the  
Dean of Students**

1206 Murphy Hall

825-3871

August, 1994

2. If you allow students to use notes or a page of formulas, consider providing that document yourself, at the start of the exercise. This reduces the possibility of a student bringing in a completed exam or unauthorized aids with the notes.

3. Secure the exam in a locked office and desk, etc., whatever is available until you are ready to administer it.

4. If you wish students to use blue books, consider:

•Providing those through your department and the start of the exam; or Collecting them at the beginning to be stamped and randomly redistributed.

5. Consider assigning seats so that students are seated randomly during the exam.

6. If you are inclined to permit make-up exams, consider reordering the questions or using a different exam.

7. Encourage those who have studied together to not sit together during the exam.

8. If assigning a "take-home" exam discuss in advance the amount of collaboration and help that is permissible.

-3-

### Confronting Cheating:

#### During the exam:

1. If possible, get a "second opinion," (i.e., to observe the behavior and confirm your suspicion).

2. If possible, move the student with whom you believe to be responsible to another location, creating as little disturbance as possible. If you know the room will be too small for spacious seating, contact your departmental administrator to request a larger examination room.

3. Take note of the time and/or circumstances of the observation - (and/or move of the student), and the location in the exam room. This is especially helpful in comparing exams.

4. If unauthorized materials appear, remove them, creating as little disturbance as possible. Note the time and place in the exam of the removal.

5. Consider passing around a sign-in sheet to determine who is sitting where, or checking ID's.

5. ALWAYS allow the student to complete the exercise. Although it may seem unlikely at the time, there is always a chance that you are mistaken in your suspicions.

-4-

#### After the exam:

1. Explain your concerns to the student. Be as objective (not accusatory) as possible.

2. You may not assign a disciplinary grade. If appropriate, tell the student that you are assigning a temporary grade of "DR" (deferred report) and are referring the issue to the Dean of Students' Office for resolution.

3. Compare the exams in question. Note similarities in both correct and incorrect responses. Are these similarities found in other students' responses? Do you know if the students studied together? Can you (or another proctor) recall the names of students seated behind these, who might also have observed some communication?

4. Put your concerns in writing, including copies of the original exam with altered or copied answers marked, and any supporting documentation. Send this to the Dean of Students' Office for adjudication.

-5-

#### Preparing to Grade an Exam:

On occasion, a grader makes a mistake and marks an answer incorrectly. Many instructors routinely consider regrade requests from students to correct those errors. Unfortunately, some students have attempted to exploit this practice by changing their answers after the exam has been returned and resubmitting the fabricated work for credit.

There are several ways to minimize the likelihood of such fabrications occurring:

1. Several departments photocopy all graded exams prior to returning them.

2. If resources don't permit, some instructors photocopy the graded exam of students who, on earlier exercises, have requested regrading which resulted in a significant increase in grade. If another regrading request is submitted, the returned exam is compared with the photocopy prior to modifying the grade.

3. As you grade the exam, mark, in pen, through the area where the original answer should be (for objective tests).

4. At the end of the last sentence of an essay, draw a line through any remaining space to indicate where the answer ended.

-6-