

* Between 74 and 98% of college students admit to cheating while they were in high school.¹

What is academic integrity? Why does it matter?

Academic integrity is a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to the fundamental value of honesty.² As an educator, I foster and support a culture of open and thoughtful intellectual discourse within this context.

Think about the relationships in your life and the values you share with the people you know. When you consider your friends and loved ones, and the compare them to the relationships in your life that are not positive, how important is the value of honesty? When we assess the weight of truthfulness in our lives we often find that honesty is the basis for all human relationships.

In addition to its role in our relationships, honesty is the foundation of teaching, learning, and research and is the prerequisite for earning trust, fairness, and responsibility. My classroom policies deplore and reject plagiarism, cheating, lying, fraud, theft, and any other dishonest behavior that jeopardizes the rights and welfare of the school community and diminishes the worth of your future academic degree.

If one's character is best demonstrated when nobody is watching, and if you become what you repeatedly do, then **you actively define your own integrity and you decide whom you will become.** Whatever your past behavior has been, I hope you *decide to give yourself the permission and the challenge to create within yourself a character of integrity.*

1. "Academic Cheating Fact Sheet," Stanford University, 2015. <https://web.stanford.edu/class/engr110/cheating.html>

2. "The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity," The Center for Academic Integrity, October, 1999. [http://
www.academicintegrity.org/ica/assets/FVProject.pdf](http://www.academicintegrity.org/ica/assets/FVProject.pdf).