

Tips and Suggestions to Support Academic Integrity in Newly Online Courses

Students commit academic misconduct because they are stressed about their performance, unable to meet deadlines, or do not understand the rules and expectations for assignments. All of these stressors are heightened as we move online in response to the current public health crisis. The most effective things you can do to support academic integrity are to be flexible and empathetic as you revise course policies and to communicate those policies and your support clearly, consistently, and frequently.

Below are some things to consider as you adapt your course. Many of these are common practice in online or Carmen-intensive courses already.

Students may struggle to manage the shift to online courses because they have limited access to the internet, have challenges in managing their time when away from campus, or have other responsibilities and complications related to the cascade of closures and health crises associated with Covid-19. Establish and reinforce channels of communication so that you and the students can navigate these and still meet the expected learning outcomes of your course. Consider encouraging students with SLDS accommodations to update those and share any changes in light of new course formats.

Syllabi are long and the details of policies tend to be understood in the abstract (if at all) rather than in reference to specific assignments. As you modify assignments, consider how you might reinforce appropriate academic conduct and add specific guidance to assignments. [“Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education” by WCET, UT Telecampus and Instructional Technology Council](#) has some excellent suggestions, as does [ODEE’s guide to “Designing Assessments That Don’t Lend Themselves to Cheating.”](#)

Support academic integrity by providing refreshers and reminders about key issues:

- Make sure students know the expectations for citation in written responses and that they have access to resources that explain how to cite and document their collaborations. [The Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing’s page on plagiarism](#) and [University Libraries’ research guide on citation management software](#) may help get students pointed in the right direction.
- Consider alignment of format and mode of delivery. If students are taking a closed-book exam in an un-proctored environment, make sure that there are ways to prevent or detect use of external resources. Consider other modes of assessment if it is not possible to restrict or monitor use of external resources. Timed quizzes within Carmen and the online proctoring tool [“Proctorio”](#) may be helpful tools for exams.
- Enable “TurnItIn” for written submission through Carmen, and let students know that you will be using this product. For instructions and more information, visit [ODEE’s Turnitin resource page for instructors](#).
- Articulate a clear and detailed policy on collaboration and communication about course materials. Students will want to connect with each other and collaborate. Explain your expectations and provide clear guidance about the channels for this communication and any limits that there might be to these discussions. For example, are students allowed to discuss assignments in group chat threads on platforms like GroupMe or WhatsApp? Is there an “official” shared channel for communication?
- Provide guidance for accessing library resources like e-books, e-journals, and databases remotely. Most students are used to doing this from on-campus IP addresses and may not know how to log in remotely. The library has [instructions for logging in remotely and setting up a Bookmarklet to enable easier access](#).