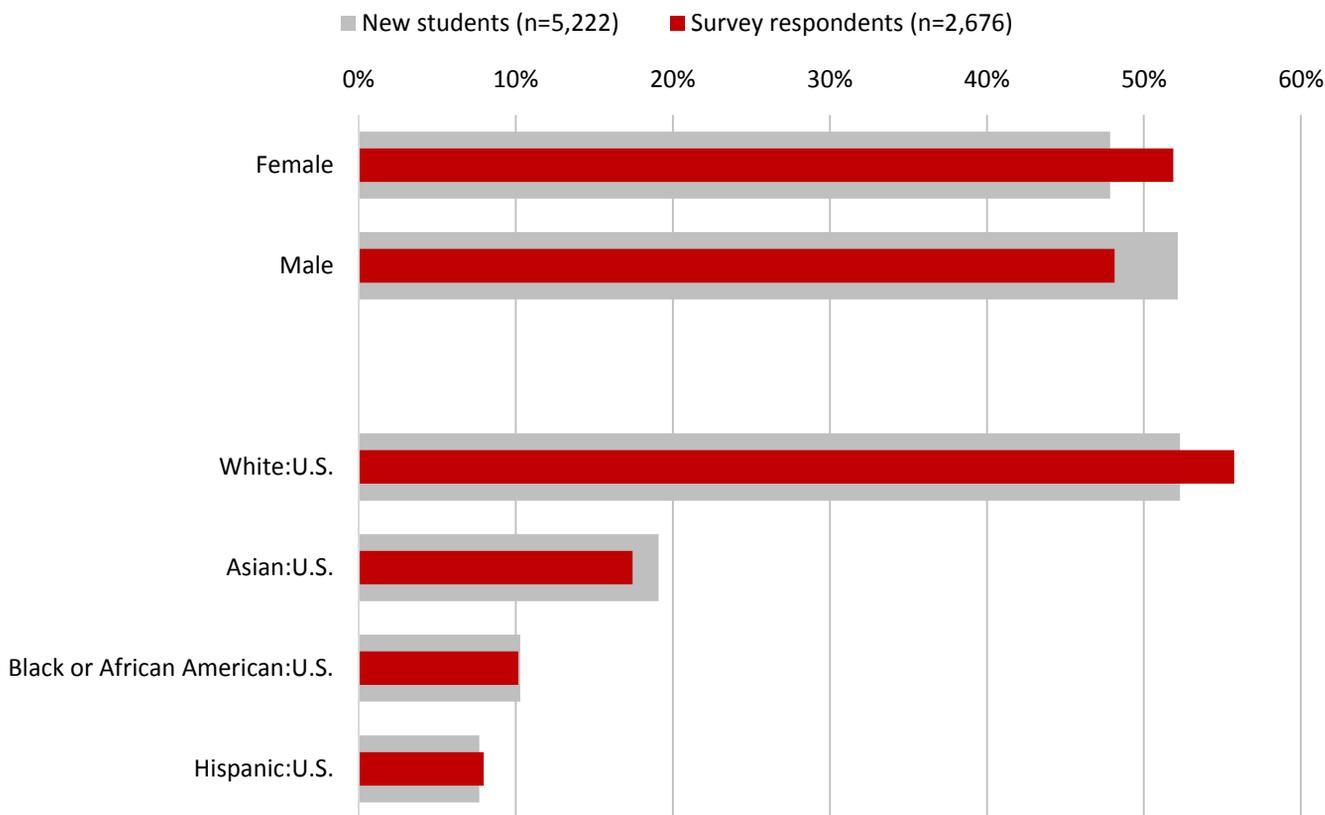This Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) Snapshot by the Beginnings subgroup reports findings on first-year students' responses to questions about academic integrity at UMD. The data included represent results from the Beginning Student Survey (BSS), an annual paper survey administered approximately 8-10 weeks into the Fall 2017 semester during courses such as English 101, University 100 (including Freshmen Connection sections), and Honors 100.

Created by priyanka from Noun Project

Respondent Demographics

■ New students (n=5,222) ■ Survey respondents (n=2,676)

Chart categories (0% – 60% scale): Female, Male, White:U.S., Asian:U.S., Black or African American:U.S., Hispanic:U.S.

During the Fall 2017 semester, 2,837 of the 5,222 students new to campus completed the survey. However demographics were only available for 94% (n=2,676) of survey respondents. Demographic breakdown of respondents generally reflects that of new students. Fewer than 5% of respondents are of the following race/ethnicity categories, which is why they are not included in the chart above but are included in other report analyses: Two or More: U.S., Foreign, Unknown: U.S., American Indian or Alaska Native: U.S., and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: U.S. Survey data in this report represent only the self-reported responses of survey respondents, not all UMD students; therefore, use caution when generalizing. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Background

In an attempt to better understand first-year students' perceptions of academic integrity and UMD's Honor Code, CAWG collaborated with the Office of Student Conduct and Office of Undergraduate Studies. Through this Snapshot, the Beginnings subgroup aims to answer:

- What are student experiences with the honor code at UMD?
- How aware are students of UMD's academic integrity policies?
- What are students' perceptions of academic integrity?
- What consequences can UMD use to deter students from cheating?
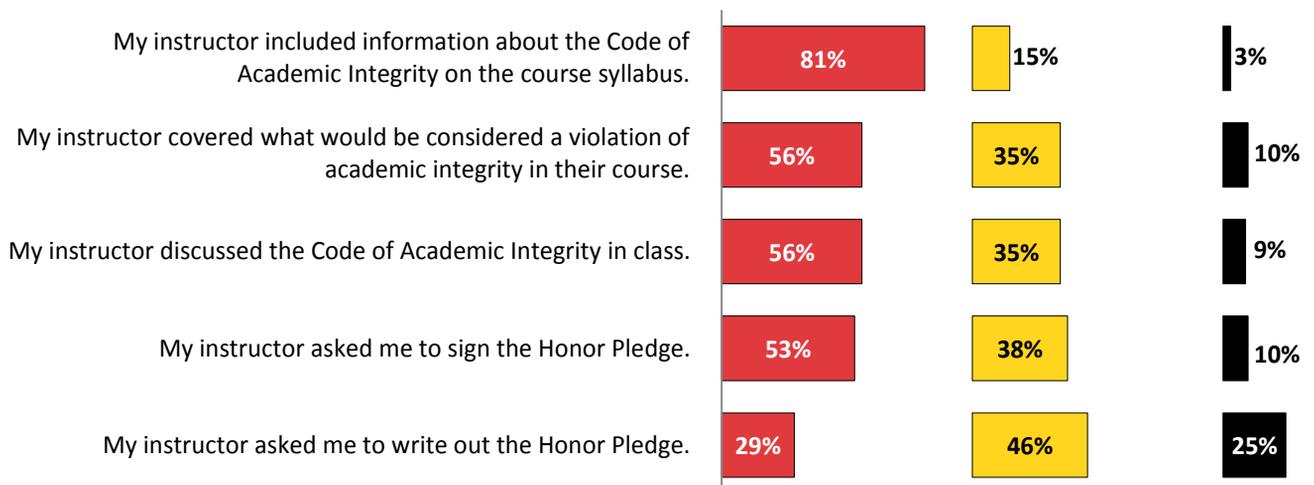- What can UMD do to promote a culture of academic integrity?

Created by Márcio Duarte
from Noun Project

What are student experiences with the honor code at UMD?

Student Experience Varies With How Instructors Cover Academic Integrity
*Survey question: This semester, in how many classes have you discussed
each of these aspects of UMD's academic integrity policies in class?*

■ 3+ courses   □ 1-2 courses   ■ 0 courses

	3+ courses	1-2 courses	0 courses
My instructor included information about the Code of Academic Integrity on the course syllabus.	81%	15%	3%
My instructor covered what would be considered a violation of academic integrity in their course.	56%	35%	10%
My instructor discussed the Code of Academic Integrity in class.	56%	35%	9%
My instructor asked me to sign the Honor Pledge.	53%	38%	10%
My instructor asked me to write out the Honor Pledge.	29%	46%	25%

N = 2,809 – 2,819 depending on item

- The most common student experiences with UMD academic integrity policies are through course syllabi. More than four out of five respondents (81%) reported at least three of their instructors included the Code of Academic Integrity on the syllabus. The least common student experience was writing out the Honor Pledge in class.
- Almost all respondents (90%) indicated that at least one instructor asked them to **sign** the Honor Pledge and most respondents (75%) had at least one instructor ask them to **write** the Pledge.

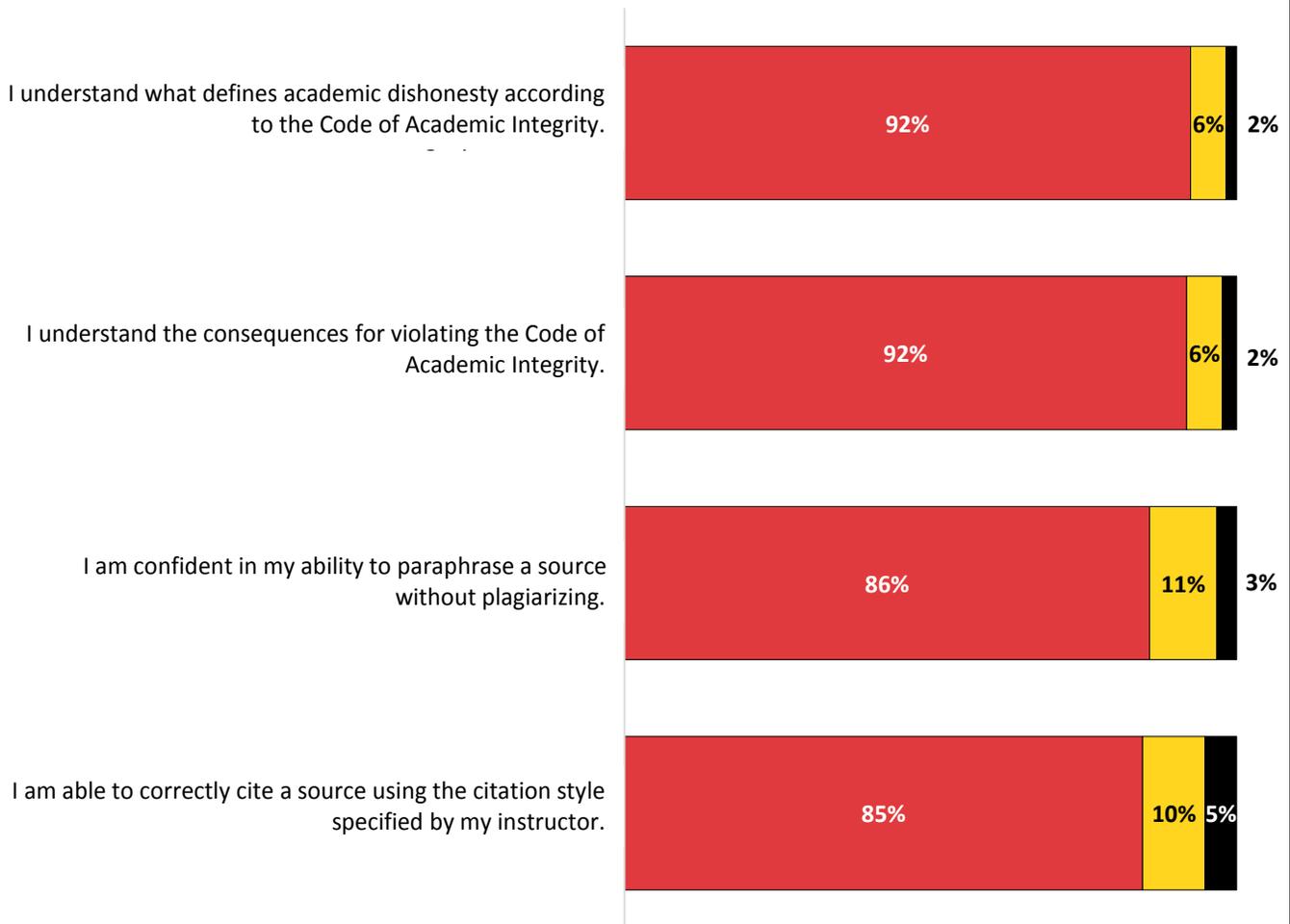> **Question to consider:** The Code of Academic Integrity states that students are to write and sign the honor pledge for each academic exercise. How can UMD encourage instructors to include this practice in their courses and convey the importance of academic integrity to students?
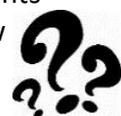
How aware are students of UMD's academic integrity policies?

Student's <u>Self-Reported</u> Knowledge About The Code Of Academic Integrity Is High

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   □ Neutral   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree

I understand what defines academic dishonesty according to the Code of Academic Integrity.
92% **6%** **2%**

I understand the consequences for violating the Code of Academic Integrity.
92% **6%** **2%**

I am confident in my ability to paraphrase a source without plagiarizing.
86% **11%** **3%**

I am able to correctly cite a source using the citation style specified by my instructor.
85% **10%** **5%**
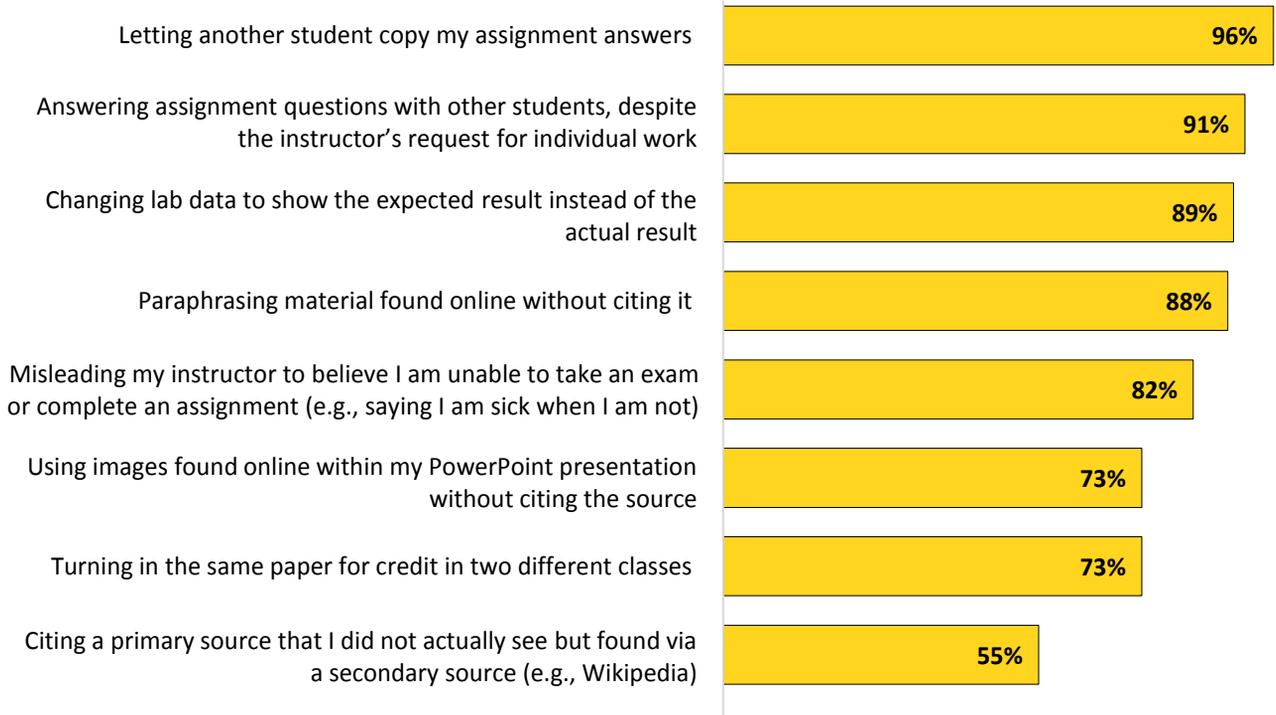
N = 2,830 – 2,833 depending on item

- Many respondents reported high levels of confidence in their ability to avoid certain types of academic dishonesty. Almost all respondents are confident in their ability to paraphrase a source without plagiarizing (86%) and agree that they understand what defines academic dishonesty according to the Code of Academic Integrity (92%).
- While nearly all respondents reported being confident in their understanding of what constitutes academic dishonesty and in their ability to avoid it, a test of their knowledge suggests areas for improvement, as reported on the next page.
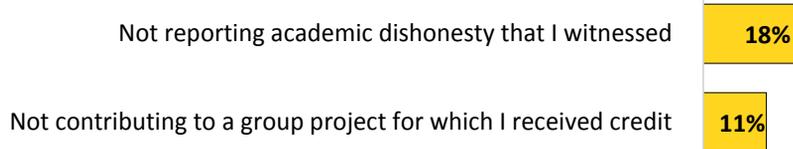
Students' <u>Tested</u> Knowledge Reveals Confusion Exists Around Academic Integrity

Survey question: Indicate whether or not each behavior is an example of academic dishonesty as the term is used at UMD.
Response options: Yes, No, Unsure

% who correctly identified that the following <u>ARE</u> academic integrity violations

Behavior	%
Letting another student copy my assignment answers	96%
Answering assignment questions with other students, despite the instructor's request for individual work	91%
Changing lab data to show the expected result instead of the actual result	89%
Paraphrasing material found online without citing it	88%
Misleading my instructor to believe I am unable to take an exam or complete an assignment (e.g., saying I am sick when I am not)	82%
Using images found online within my PowerPoint presentation without citing the source	73%
Turning in the same paper for credit in two different classes	73%
Citing a primary source that I did not actually see but found via a secondary source (e.g., Wikipedia)	55%

% who correctly identified that the following <u>NOT</u> academic integrity violations

Behavior	%
Not reporting academic dishonesty that I witnessed	18%
Not contributing to a group project for which I received credit	11%

N = 2,812 – 2,822 depending on item

- Most respondents correctly identified obvious examples of academic integrity violations, such as letting another student copy homework (96%) or failing to cite online material (88%). However, fewer than 3 in 4 correctly named academic dishonesty as turning in the same paper for two different classes (73%) and using online images without citations (73%).
- Correctly citing material from secondary sources represented one of the most challenging examples for students to correctly identify. Just over half (55%) understood that they should not cite material found on Wikipedia as a primary source.
- Few respondents understood that, while unethical, some items were not violations. For example, not contributing to a group project for which you receive credit or not reporting academic dishonesty that you witnessed are not academic dishonesty as the term is used at UMD.
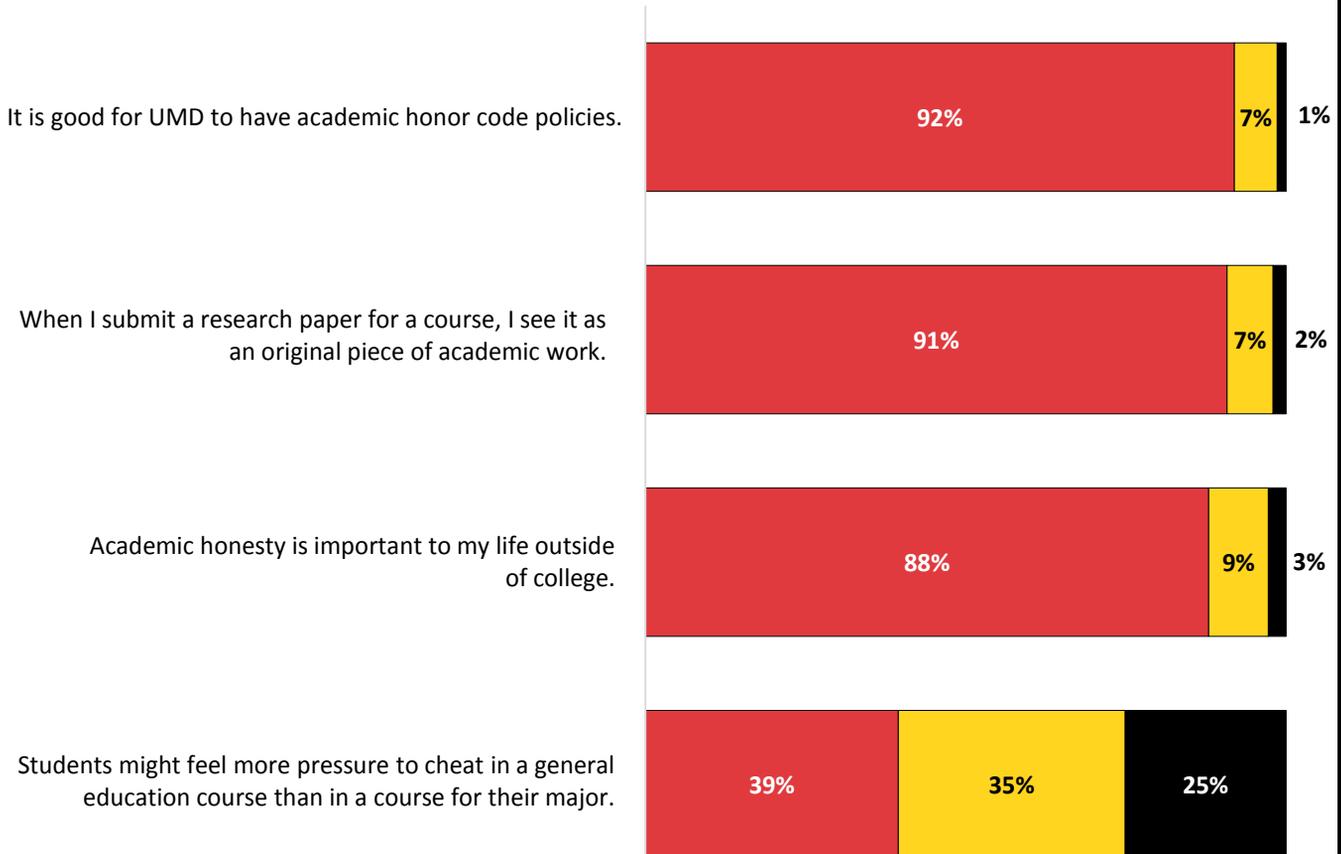
> **Question to consider:** Were you surprised by any actions that are considered academic honor code violations or any actions that are not? What might be the source of this confusion?

What are students' perceptions of academic integrity?

Academic Integrity Is Important To Respondents

■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Neutral   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree

Statement	Agree or Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
It is good for UMD to have academic honor code policies.	92%	7%	1%
When I submit a research paper for a course, I see it as an original piece of academic work.	91%	7%	2%
Academic honesty is important to my life outside of college.	88%	9%	3%
Students might feel more pressure to cheat in a general education course than in a course for their major.	39%	35%	25%

N = 2,824 – 2,831 depending on item

- The majority of respondents report academic integrity is important both on campus and off. About 9 out of 10 respondents agree or strongly agree that it is good for UMD to have academic honor code policies (92%) and that academic honesty is important to their lives outside of college (88%).

Question to consider: There was no consensus as to whether students would feel more pressure to cheat in general education courses versus major courses. How might UMD engage students effectively at different levels of their academic careers to encourage academic integrity?
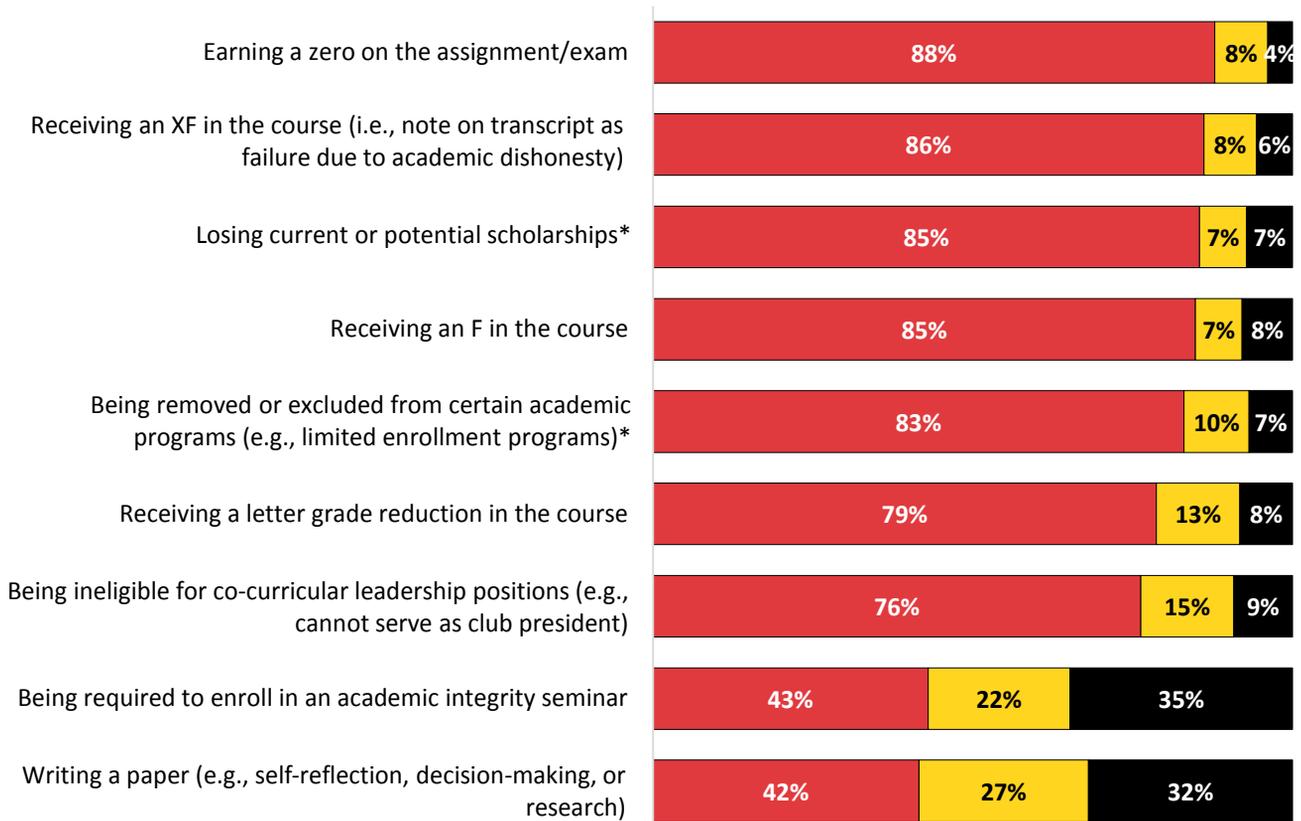
What consequences can UMD use to deter students from cheating?

Academic Consequences Were Rated As The Strongest Deterrents
*Survey question: How helpful would each of the following
be in promoting academic integrity at UMD?*

Legend: ■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Neutral   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree

Item	Agree or Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
Earning a zero on the assignment/exam	88%	8%	4%
Receiving an XF in the course (i.e., note on transcript as failure due to academic dishonesty)	86%	8%	6%
Losing current or potential scholarships*	85%	7%	7%
Receiving an F in the course	85%	7%	8%
Being removed or excluded from certain academic programs (e.g., limited enrollment programs)*	83%	10%	7%
Receiving a letter grade reduction in the course	79%	13%	8%
Being ineligible for co-curricular leadership positions (e.g., cannot serve as club president)	76%	15%	9%
Being required to enroll in an academic integrity seminar	43%	22%	35%
Writing a paper (e.g., self-reflection, decision-making, or research)	42%	27%	32%

N = 2,815 – 2,820 depending on item

* = These sanctions currently are not applied by the Office of Student Conduct but being found guilty of academic dishonesty may still result in these outcomes. For example, receiving an XF may lower a student's GPA below a scholarship threshold.

- Most respondents agree that grade-related consequences, such as earning a zero on an assignment, would likely deter students from violating the Code of Academic Integrity. Students seemed to respond in similar ways regardless of the severity of the grade-related consequence.
- Losing access to other aspects of the student experience, such as certain scholarships, limited enrollment programs, or leadership positions, were also strong deterrents.
- There was a lack of consensus as to whether more reflective, inward facing sanctions, such as writing a paper or attending a seminar, would reduce academic dishonesty.

Question to consider:
- Why might some consequences be more effective at deterring cheating than others?
- Given [research](#) that suggests that lapses in ethical behavior are heavily influenced by opportunity rather than moral character, how can the campus better create environments that increase the likelihood of academic integrity?
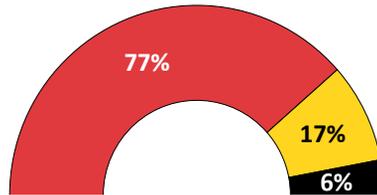
What can UMD do to promote a culture of academic integrity?

Faculty Access To Turnitin.com May Deter Plagiarism

Survey question: Knowing that UMD faculty have access to turnitin.com will deter students from plagiarizing.

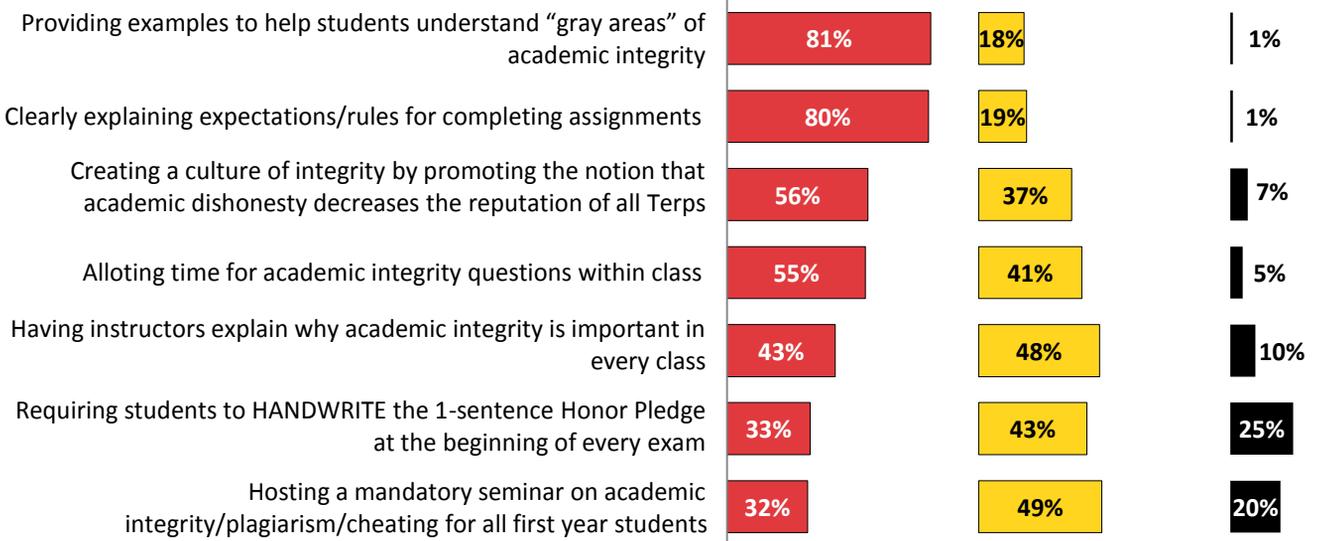■ Agree or Strongly Agree   ■ Neutral   ■ Disagree or Strongly Disagree

77%   **17%**   **6%**

N = 2,832

More Education About Academic Integrity Would Be Helpful

Survey question: How helpful would each of the following be in promoting academic integrity at UMD?

■ Very or extremely helpful   ■ Slightly or moderately helpful   ■ Not at all helpful

	Very or extremely helpful	Slightly or moderately helpful	Not at all helpful
Providing examples to help students understand "gray areas" of academic integrity	81%	18%	1%
Clearly explaining expectations/rules for completing assignments	80%	19%	1%
Creating a culture of integrity by promoting the notion that academic dishonesty decreases the reputation of all Terps	56%	37%	7%
Alloting time for academic integrity questions within class	55%	41%	5%
Having instructors explain why academic integrity is important in every class	43%	48%	10%
Requiring students to HANDWRITE the 1-sentence Honor Pledge at the beginning of every exam	33%	43%	25%
Hosting a mandatory seminar on academic integrity/plagiarism/cheating for all first year students	32%	49%	20%

N = 2,809 – 2,819, depending on item

- The most helpful ways to promote academic integrity at UMD, according to about four out of five respondents, include providing examples to help students understand "gray areas" of academic integrity (81%) and clearly explaining expectations/rules for completing assignments (80%).
- Respondents reported that mandatory seminars on academic integrity for first-year students and handwriting the honor pledge on exams would be less helpful in promoting academic integrity. At least one in five indicated that these activities would not be helpful at all.
- Turnitin is an internet-based plagiarism-detection service that UMD faculty and students can access. Just over three-quarters of respondents agreed that knowing UMD faculty have access to turnitin.com would deter students from plagiarizing. Only 6% disagreed that faculty access to turnitin.com would deter plagiarizing.

Question to consider: What are ways UMD can help instructors clearly describe "gray areas" of academic integrity to students?

Further reading on academic integrity

If you're interested in learning more about academic integrity policies, frequencies of honor code violations, or tips for promoting academic integrity in the classroom, see:

Policies
- Code of Academic Integrity (Office of the President, 2014): https://president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-iii-academic-affairs/iii-100a
- Honor Pledge (Student Honor Council): http://shc.umd.edu/SHC/HonorPledgeUse.aspx

Guides
- Information on Academic Integrity for Faculty and Staff, including FAQs, case referral guides, and promoting academic integrity in the classroom tips (Office of Student Conduct): https://www.studentconduct.umd.edu/faculty-staff
- Teaching to Promote Academic Integrity (Office of Undergraduate Studies): http://gened.umd.edu/for-faculty/integrity.html
- Academic Integrity (Office of Faculty Affairs): https://www.faculty.umd.edu/teach/integrity.html
- Ethical Use of Information (University Libraries): http://lib.guides.umd.edu/c.php?g=848037
- Plagiarism and Honor Code Information (Teaching & Learning Transformation Center): https://tltc.umd.edu/plagiarism-and-honor-code

Other Campus Codes
The Code of Academic Integrity discussed in this snapshot covers different topic areas and has different procedural protocols than the following:
- Code of Student Conduct: https://president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-v-student-affairs/v-100b
- Sexual Misconduct Policy: https://president.umd.edu/communications/statements/sexual-misconduct-policy

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The Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) regularly gathers and exchanges information about UMD student and alumni experiences. The group is charged with developing a campus "Culture of Evidence" in which data and assessment can inform campus decision making. Its three subgroups focus on freshman experiences, junior/senior student experiences, and retention and completion efforts. For more information, to view past reports, or to join a CAWG subgroup, please visit http://ter.ps/CAWG.