

# Good example of cheating at orange coast college: why it takes place and what can...

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



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## **Introduction**

I can still recount the day my best friend in 4th grade, Sammy, was waiting outside the principal's office, with nothing but regret filling his eyes, waiting for his mother who was summoned for a meeting with the principal. That's because Sammy was caught cheating." Cheating" is defined as the intentional misrepresentation of the nature, source, or other aspects of academic work in order to receive undue credit, or to take part in such a representation with someone else (ACA). In order to understand the act of cheating in OCC, we must look at the topic as a whole. In this report we will discuss the very nature of cheating, why it happens and how it applies in OCC's case (which will be done during the course of this report).

## **An overview on cheating**

Around May 2012, a teaching assistant for a public class at Harvard discovered that nearly half of the class (125 students) was cheating (Buchmann). This should prove the fact that cheating is a concept not limited by location; rather it is so prevalent, that even a prestigious university like Harvard has fallen victim to this category of academic dishonesty. In recent studies of around a 1000 students, 80% of the subject at around 23 institutions reported that they had cheated at least once in college (Felder,). This data does paint somewhat of a picture which portrays the reality of academic dishonesty.

## **Why it happens**

It's hard to say what makes cheating common and accepted. There are many varying opinions about the prevalence of cheating yesterday and today and why students are so likely to take part. The reasons can be put into five categories; competitive pressures, ambiguous attitudes, lack of understanding, institutional apathy, lack of understanding, and self interest (Buchmann,). An individual's decision to cheat could be because of any one of these five sources or a mixture of various.

- Ambiguous attitudes as to what act can be defined as cheating to each student varies, which tends to open ways towards academic dishonesty.
- Competitive behavior may cause a student to choose success over integrity
- Lack of respect for an institution " may cause a student to perceive it as a place that does not deserve their honesty", (Buchmann) due to which they

can commit a dishonest act themselves or fail to report one.

- Earlier we talked about ambiguous attitudes; this can also be caused by a lack of understanding of the institutions rules and regulations.
- Being self-interested means the person acts exclusively with regard to one's own welfare or advantage (Murove). Keeping his or her own interest in mind, a student can always justify cheating as long as it's benefitting them.

## **How can cheating be controlled?**

### Parents Role

Three specific suggestions can be given to parents (Ehrlich and Fu,).

- First, parents should take into account the fact that they are their children's most significant role models and " In that respect, one should assess the number of times they may have cheated (in anyway) in their children's presence." (Ehrlich and Fu) Parents need to reanalyze their actions and act accordingly, at least in front of their children, to reduce any learned behavior that may exist.
- Second, parents need to stress upon the learning factor of academics rather than the grades when they discuss school work with their children. That in turn reduces ' undue pressure' to get good grades, regardless of whether the method to do so is honest or not.
- Third, parents must talk about the act of cheating and its repercussions with their children openly. At the very beginning of every school year, and subsequently thereafter, they must talk about cheating and why it is harmful to not just their children, but to their classmates, their schools, and their teachers as well.

- Why can this not work?

Parents can of course be communicated the importance of teaching the significance of academic ethics, they can even be provided with informal workshops to train them how to do so as well, but OCC cannot, after all, intrude on their personal lives and keep a track on whether or not parents are playing their part in diminishing the act of cheating.

## **Role of Faculty**

The Instructors within a college should do the following (Felder,):

- Define explicitly what is considered cheating in accordance with what the institute has stated in its honor codes
- Follow the procedures outlined by the institution for reporting cheating; this, in Orange Coast's case, includes filing an academic dishonesty report.
- Why can this not work?

If OCC was to become too stringent in its policies, there can come a time where students feel like they are, for lack of a phrase, being governed under an autocratic system, where everything is only about rules and regulations. This can cause an automatic distaste towards the schools system, and hence further promote cheating.

## **Honor codes**

Cheating has become such a widespread educational epidemic, that most people have accepted it as incurable; that is incorrect. Some institutions have relatively less cheating than others, due to the existence of academic honor codes. The " Academic Honor Code" covers student conduct in such activities as classroom and laboratory assignments, examinations, quizzes,

papers, and presentations (Bowdoin). According to a study conducted by William Bowers in his research paper " Student Dishonesty and its Control in Colleges", institutions with honor codes have lower frequency rates of cheating than those who do not have codes (Callahan,).

However, on another hand, in a replication of his study by McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield, it was found that those schools that had codes had lower levels (as an example, whispering answers vs. hiding cheat sheets) of cheating than those that did not (McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield,). Why is that so? It was found that this occurred because those that did not have codes instilled a sense of responsibility within their students through communication of academic conduct, and those that did have codes, did not do so very well (McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield,). Hence McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield reached on the conclusion that to prevent academic dishonesty, schools must not only strongly implement these honor codes, but also uphold that " an academic institutions ability to develop a mutual understanding and general acceptance of its academic integrity codes and policies have a significant and substantive impact on pupil perception of their fellows behaviors. Hence, programs that aim specifically at distributing, elaborating and gaining student and faculty acceptance of integrity policies may be of particular use" (McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield,). Therefore, these codes must be embedded in the mindset of these students, and not just taught to them.

- Why can this not work

It can be argued that implementing so on a campus can be tedious work because " honor codes are not a panacea and are more difficult to

implement on larger campuses” (McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield,). Hence achieving such a task can be time consuming, but then again “ many of the principles on which such codes are built can be implemented on any campus” and implementing them will have long term benefits (McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield,).

- How CAN this work?

Let us look at it this way; one of the few reasons a person does not steal is not just because he is legally forbidden to do so, but also because he had a certain inert value system instilled in him when he was younger, either through his parents or through a similar guardian, etc. In much the same way, students must feel that the act of cheating is not just part of school policy, but also a part of who they are as a student. This will in turn do three things:

- Value system: workshops and classroom counseling at OCC can make a student develop a value system that will carry with it concepts which will become a part of the students beliefs, thus allowing him to pass better judgements.

- Responsibility: The student will feel responsible not just towards himself, but also towards his school to the point where he will do his personal best not to promote this act, and others like it.

- Integrity: When the time comes to choose between ‘ cheating in order to score high’ vs. ‘ not cheating because it’s the right thing to do’, the student’s academic integrity will be strong enough to prevent/her from choosing the latter.

## Conclusion

We have extensively discussed cheating as a widespread academic issue by first having a brief overview as to what it is, then analyzing as to why it occurs, and what can be done about it. Even though these solutions may not eliminate cheating completely in OCC, they can curb it to a large extent. From the entire passage we can conclude that, even though cheating may be the fault of one individual, but on a larger scale when the act becomes a big statistic, it directly affects academic culture.

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