

Tiered Seating and Academic Integrity

Seating Arrangements in Classrooms

- Where possible, spread the students out, leaving empty seats between them (Rutgers, SFU)
- Assign seating so that after the exam you can determine the location of each student (University of Delaware). Some ways of doing this include:
 - Post a sheet with the last 5 digits of student ID numbers and the seating assignments outside the exam room or on an overhead in the room (McMaster) or hand out tickets with seat numbers as students enter the room.
 - Randomly assign seating, preventing students from anticipating where they will be seated (Rutgers).
 - “Number seats and tests and then assign students to sit in the seat with the same number as the number on their test” (CITL)
 - If there is a group of students who are known for collaborating with each other or whom you suspect might be cheating, you can use seat assignments to spread them out (Rutgers).
- Whatever method you use to determine the seating arrangement, you must then somehow record where people are sitting. Have students sign in and indicate their seat number as well as record their seat number on their exam booklets (McGill). If the room does not have numbered seating:
 - Create your own seating plan (McMaster). Keep a copy of this seating plan with any sign-in sheets, exam booklets, and records of the exam.
 - Pass a sign-in sheet down each row and have students fill in the relevant information – remember to label each sign-in sheet with the row number! (McGill)

Test Design

- Where possible, use test formats other than multiple-choice questions. Short-answer, essay, or problem-solving questions are harder to copy than Scantron bubbles (UC Davis).
- Require students to submit not just the answer but all the work that led to the answer (UC Davis).
- Change test questions frequently and “keep track of how many copies of a test are made, how many are handed out... and how many are handed back in so you know if one is stolen” (McMaster).
- Include a blank sheet of paper with the test booklet and instruct students to cover their responses. Instruct students in the use of this blank sheet before the exam and in the test instructions, and encourage them to use it while walking around the room (Symbaluk, 2014).
- Use multiple versions of exams. For classes of 40 students or less, use at least two versions of an exam. For classes of 60 to 80 students, use at least three versions. For classes with 80 students or more, use at least four versions (Symbaluk, 2014). When designing multiple versions of exams you have a couple of options:
 - “Just move the first two pages to the end of the exam or use a similar strategy to ensure the response columns will not appear identical for both versions for anyone scanning their classmates’ exams for answers” (Symbaluk, 2014).

- Scramble the order of questions or answers, or change key variables, values, or terms used in the questions (Rutgers). Software like Respondus, which is available through Ryerson's [CCS department](#), can automate this process (McGill).
- Number answer sheets and test booklets, so that number on each booklet corresponds to the number on the answer sheet (CITL).
- When distributing the exams:
 - Multiple-version tests can be laid out in a pattern in the classroom in advance, ensuring that the same version is not within students' viewing distance (McMaster). However, keep in mind that with large classes, there is always the potential that a student could leave with an extra copy of the exam undetected.
 - If you prefer not to set out the exams in advance, "systematically hand out alternative forms, taking into account students sitting laterally as well as those sitting in front and in back of each other" (CITL). To distribute exams so that no one is sitting "next to, in front of, or behind a student writing the same version," you can, for example "use versions 1 and 2 alternating on odd rows and versions 3 and 4 alternating on even rows" (McGill)
 - Use different coloured cover sheets with randomly assigned colors so you can see from afar whether adjacent students are working on the same test. Photocopying the entire exams on different coloured paper also makes it impossible for students to switch the version of the test they are writing (Rutgers; McMaster). The colour coding also makes it easier to match up the version with the correct answer key when marking (McGill).

Invigilation

- Be an active presence in the room – patrol the room at "unpredictable moments using unpredictable routes." Keep an eye on the students who gravitate to the middle of the room as opposed to the aisles. Students who plan on cheating will move toward the centre where they are less accessible (SFU).
- "Invigilate the examination from the back of the room, not the front. You will find you can see all you need to see, especially if the room is tiered, while the students will not be able to see you" (SFU).
- If multiple sections of a class are sitting for the exam at once, have students sit together by section. This minimizes "ghost" exam takers by making it easier for the faculty member or TAs to recognize and account for their own students (CITL).
- Have at least one proctor per each 50 students, especially if the proctors are not the TAs or instructors for the course and are unfamiliar with the students (CITL).
- Have students sign an honour statement on a cover page attesting that all the work they submit is their own (UC Davis) and sign either each page of the exam or their answer sheet (UDeI).
- Develop an orderly procedure for systematically collecting exam booklets, rather than allowing students to rush out of the room. This will prevent any confusion over exam versions, as well as prevent students from claiming that they handed in answer that have been lost by the faculty member (SFU).

Work Cited

- Center for Innovation in Teaching & Learning (CITL). (2015). Dealing with Cheating. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. <http://cte.illinois.edu/testing/exam/cheat.html>
- McGill University. Preventing Cheating on Exams. <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/staff/exam>
- McMaster University. (2004). Cheating in Tests/Exams!
https://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity/instructors/proc_forms/suspectcheating.pdf
- Rutgers University. Strategies to Prevent Cheating.
<http://www.academicintegrity.org/ica/assets/StrategiesToPreventCheating.pdf>
- Simon Fraser University. Tips for managing exams: Preventing academic dishonesty in exams.
<https://www.sfu.ca/students/academicintegrity/resources/managingexamstips.html>
- Symbaluk, D.G. (2014). Practical Tips for Minimizing Cheating During Exams. *Faculty Focus*.
<http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-classroom-management/practical-tips-for-minimizing-cheating-during-exams/>
- UC Davis. (2006). Creating a Climate of Academic Integrity: Tips to Prevent Cheating. Office of Student Judicial Affairs, University of California, Davis. <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/tips.pdf>
- University of Delaware. Reference Guide to Academic Integrity.
<https://www1.udel.edu/studentconduct/ai.html>