

Developments in Business Simulation and Experiential Learning, Volume 30, 2003  
**INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY INTO THE 21<sup>ST</sup>  
CENTURY CLASSROOM: ARE WE FACILITATING  
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY?**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

*The reality of academic dishonesty is not a new topic in the academic literature, and the advantages and disadvantages of using multimedia technology in the classroom to enhance teaching and learning processes have been fairly well explored. However, the effects of more recent advances in technology, such as classroom management software, e-mail technology, and the widespread use of Instant Messaging, have not been investigated to date. Spurred by recent evidence of a relationship between cheating in college and acts of dishonesty in the workplace and the fact that academic cheating appears to be more common among business school students, this Interactive Session was developed. The session will focus on two primary goals: first, to identify how new advances in technology are creating opportunities for cheating and, second, to develop an action plan to encourage academic honesty among students in schools of business.*

#### **Background**

In August of 2002, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported what many educators have experienced for some time, that colleges seem to be engaged in a losing battle to prevent students from buying term papers online (Corruption Plagues Academe Around the World, August 2, 2002). A quick Internet search using the Yahoo! search engine reveals numerous “sponsor matches” for custom term papers and pre-written term papers, including [www.fastpapers.com](http://www.fastpapers.com), [www.thepaperexperts.com](http://www.thepaperexperts.com),

[www.papermasters.com](http://www.papermasters.com), and almost 200 other individual site matches.

Purchasing term papers from online paper mills and engaging in other forms of academic dishonesty have been discussed in the academic literature over the last decade (e.g., Campbell, Swift, & Denton, 2000; McCabe & Trevino, 1995) and numerous studies have investigated the antecedents and subsequent outcomes of cheating behavior (e.g., Jackson, Levine, Furnham, & Burr, 2002; McCabe & Trevino, 1996). Key among the findings is that the “opportunity to cheat” is the largest single determinant of students’ ethical attitudes and actions (Rawwas & Isakson, 2000).

As multimedia technology affords the opportunity to transform teaching and learning processes (Mueller, Jones, Ricks, Schlegelmilch, & Van Deusen, 2001; Ramarapu, Cites, & Overby, 1996) and student expectations of multimedia use in the classroom grow (Snyder & Vaughan, 1998), business educators have increasingly sought new applications of technology to enhance the learning environment. It is the premise of this Interactive Session that as we incorporate more technology into the classroom delivery and evaluation process, we open ourselves to an even stronger threat of rampant cheating.

Overt acknowledgement of widespread academic dishonesty within the ABSEL community came early in ABSEL’s history, when J. Scott Armstrong of the University of Pennsylvania cautioned that cheating had become the norm in undergraduate business programs (1980). Designers of simulations and testing programs have long acknowledged the possibility of cheating and have worked to build into their programs mechanisms to impede or discourage such actions (e.g., Koziara, Anderson, &

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Burton, 1986; Seyedian & Aghazadeh, 1987; Thavikulwat, 1986; Varble & Smiley, 1988). Yet, the effects of more recent advances in classroom management software (i.e., BlackBoard, WebCT), the widespread use of e-mail technology, and the popularity of Instant Messaging capability have not been investigated to date.

The session facilitators see these issues as particularly salient to experiential educators as we seek to create learning environments that empower our students (Leonard, Leonard, McKeag, & Mullins, 1997), yet encourage standards of academic honesty (Schibrowsky & Peltier, 1992). Evidence that cheating is more common among students interested in pursuing business careers (McCabe & Trevino, 1995) would seem to make this topic of particular interest to ABSEL members. Further, the recent evidence of a relationship between cheating in college and acts of dishonesty in the workplace (Nonis, & Swift, 2001) would seem to make this discussion both timely and appropriate in these days of corporate scandal.

### SESSION OVERVIEW

The general goals for this session are two-fold: to increase awareness of the ways in which new advances in teaching technology and technology in general can create opportunities for cheating, and to develop an action plan to facilitate academic honesty among students. Specifically, participants will:

- Learn of recent evidence linking increased plagiarism to the increased usage of the Internet and classroom management software,
- Share experiences of dishonest student behavior in technology-assisted classroom, project, and testing situations, and
- Collaborate on ways to reduce learners' opportunities to engage in dishonest acts and facilitate a learning environment that encourages ethical behavior.

We propose to start with a brief introduction of academic dishonesty in general, leading into a more in-depth discussion of the advantages - and disadvantages - of multimedia and common-use technology as it relates to the issue of academic dishonesty. Next, we propose to "go online" briefly to show the web pages of a few Internet papermills and the www.phuckschool.com culture that exists. Participants will then be encouraged to share their experiences, perhaps the most blatant examples of cheating they have personally seen. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the session will conclude with open discussion of ways to counter the problem by highlighting the role of students AND faculty in abating the problem.

The session is open to all ABSEL participants with interest in exploring the relationship between learning technology and academic dishonesty. The results of the interactive session depend upon lively participation and discussion of interested members. Ideally, participants will come away with constructive approaches to facilitating academic honesty in their learning environments.

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