



2019 International Day of Action Against Contract Cheating: Event Brief

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Background

Contract cheating is also called “academic outsourcing”. Contract cheating occurs when someone other than the student completes academic work that the student then submits as their own. Contract cheating breaches the expectations of a contract of integrity between the educator (i.e., professor, teaching assistant, etc.) and the student. Third parties can include, but are not limited to:

- Online services
- Friends and family
- Classmates and alumni

Contract cheating is a serious form of academic misconduct according to the University policy and procedure.

It is estimated that Canada ties the UK for second place among countries in which students outsource their academic work. The USA ranks #1 (Lancaster, 2018). Approximately 1 in 7 students buy their academic work online (Newton, 2018).

Conservative estimate for Canada: 71,000+ post-secondary students engage in contract cheating every year (Eaton, 2018).

Top 5 fields in which contract cheating occurs most (Bretag, 2017; Curtis & Clare, 2017):

1. Business
2. Engineering
3. Science
4. Humanities
5. Education

The International Day of Action Against Contract Cheating is part of a global movement to raise awareness about what contract cheating is and how to prevent it. 2019 marks the fourth year the event has taken place globally. The University of Calgary has participated since 2017, making us an institutional leader in Alberta on this important topic.

In 2019, the ad hoc planning committee has included faculty members, staff and students who are volunteering their time to raise awareness among students, faculty and all university stakeholders.

Overview

Event	Location	Time	Contact Person
Wheel of Integrity: Quiz Game	Taylor Family Digital Library (TFDL) – Main Floor	11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Leeanne Morrow
Wheel of Integrity: Quiz Game	Health Research Innovation Centre (HRIC) Atrium – Foothills Campus	11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Mady Thompson
Contract Cheating: What professors and teaching assistants need to know Workshop	TFDL Gallery Hall	10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Sarah Elaine Eaton
Pay-to-Pass Workshop	TFDL Gallery Hall	12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Nancy Chibry
Game: Don't Roll the Dice with Contract Cheating	SU – Mac Hall Courtyard – Stage by SU Offices	11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Kevin Dang
Roaming whiteboards	Science Buildings (ICT, ES, etc.)	11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Science SU Reps – People TBD

Event Descriptions

Wheel of Integrity: Quiz Game

Interactive games aimed to educate students, faculty, and staff, about contract cheating. Participants can spin a large wheel and answer questions about contract cheating to win prizes.

Game: Don't Roll the Dice with Contract Cheating

Interactive game for students who roll the dice to find out what could happen if they engage in contract cheating. Game developed by Elizabeth Tingle.

Workshop #1: Contract Cheating: What professors and teaching assistants need to know

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

10:30 – 11:30

Gallery Hall, TFDL

Max capacity: 50

How do you know if your students are buying their academic work from the Internet? How prevalent is this practice, anyway? How do you talk to your students about the issue of contract cheating? Get answers to these questions and more in this interactive workshop. Find out the latest research about academic outsourcing and get resources to help.

Participants will:

1. Gain insights into how the contract cheating industry really works
2. Learn what the latest research says
3. Learn practical ways to detect contract cheating and how to talk to students about it.

Presenter: Sarah Elaine Eaton, PhD. is the Educational Leader in Residence, Academic Integrity, at the University of Calgary. Her research focuses on academic integrity, misconduct and contract cheating.

Workshop #2: Pay-to-Pass: Knowledge as a commodity

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

12:00 – 1:00pm

Gallery Hall, TFDL

Max Capacity: 50

With the aid of social media, companies offering study ‘help’ and better grades have proliferated the post-secondary sector at an alarming rate. Students are deliberately or inadvertently breaching academic integrity regulations in the search of an easier solution to improve academic performance. This interactive workshop examines how some of these companies have created the ease and (sometimes) anonymity of online uploads and downloads.

Participants will:

1. Learn the scope of the pay-to-pass phenomenon
2. Share and discuss their experiences with pay-to-pass companies
3. Brainstorm solutions to this rising crisis.

Presenters: Ebba Kurz, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Health and Science Education
Director, O’Brien Centre for the Bachelor of Health Sciences Program
Cumming School of Medicine

Nancy Chibry, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs
Faculty of Science

Quick Facts

- Contract cheating is a broad term to describe a variety ways academic work is outsources to a third party.
- Synonyms include:
 - “Essay mills”
 - “Academic outsourcing”
 - “Ghostwriting”
 - “Assignment completion services”
 - “Thesis writing services”
- It has been estimated that over 71,000 post-secondary students in Canada engage in contract cheating every year (Eaton, 2018).
- If students engage in contract cheating once, repeat offences are probable.
- Contract cheating has been estimated to be a billion-dollar/year global industry.
- There have been documented cases of contract cheating companies blackmailing students for more money with threats to report them to their school if they do not pay more.
- Contract cheating companies do not care about students. Their sole purpose is to make money at students’ expense.
- Contract cheating is a serious form of academic misconduct according to the University policy and procedure.

Planning Committee

This is an ad hoc committee comprised of individuals committed to upholding integrity at the University of Calgary. Those who serve on this committee do so as part of their voluntary service to the University.

- Sarah Elaine Eaton, Educational Leader in Residence, Academic Integrity and Assistant Professor, Werklund School of Education (Co-Chair)
- Nancy Chibry, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs, Faculty of Science - (Co-Chair)
- Lee-Ann Penaluna, Academic Integrity Coordinator, Student Services and Canadian representative to the Global Committee
- Leeanne Morrow, Associate University Librarian, Student Learning and Engagement
- Farideh Jalilehvand, Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry
- Kevin Dang, Students Union representative
- Anayat Sidhu, Student representative
- Mady Thompson, Student representative, Cumming School of Medicine
- Ocean Matyjanka, Student representative
- Elizabeth Tingle, Student representative, Werklund School of Education
- Leila Larijani, Student representative
- Adewale Ajayi, Student representative

Links and Resources

Bretag, T., & Harper, R. (n.d.). Impossible to prove? Substantiating contract cheating. Retrieved from <https://cheatingandassessment.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/EDUCATOR-RESOURCE-Substantiating-contract-cheating.pdf>

Bretag, T. (2017). *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Good Practice Note: Addressing contract cheating to safeguard academic integrity*. Retrieved from <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/good-practice-note-addressing-contract-cheating-safeguard-academic>

Eaton, S. E. (2018). 15 Strategies to detect contract cheating. Retrieved from <http://connections.ucalgaryblogs.ca/2018/10/01/15-strategies-to-detect-contract-cheating/>

Eaton, S. E. (2018). Contract cheating: A Canadian perspective. Retrieved from <http://blogs.biomedcentral.com/bmcblog/2018/07/24/contract-cheating-a-canadian-perspective/>

Eaton, S. E. (2019). U Have Integrity: Educator Resource - How to Lead a Discovery Interview About Contract Cheating.

International Center for Academic Integrity Day of Action - <https://academicintegrity.org/day-against-contract-cheating/>

International Center for Academic Integrity. (2016). *Institutional toolkit to combat contract cheating*. Retrieved from <https://academicintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Toolkit.pdf>

University of California - San Diego. (n.d.). Excellence with Integrity: Combating Contract Cheating. Retrieved from <https://humber.ca/staff/sites/default/files/sub-attachments/Combating%20Contract%20Cheating.pdf>

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