

# Academic integrity in higher education: The case of a medium-size college in the Galilee, Israel

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# Why cheat?

Murdock and Anderman (2006)

- What is my goal? (Is the goal extrinsic?)
- Can I do this task?
- What are the costs associated with cheating?
- Can I get away with it?

# Values Matter

Wideman (2008)

- Is dishonesty an aspect of western culture?
- Is success mostly measured in monetary and status rewards?
- Are results more important than process?

# Demographics

- *Students go click, flick and cheat* – millennials and the role of technology (Khan & Balasubramanian 2012)
- male students and undergraduate students perceive cheating as less unethical and engage more in cheating behaviors (Elias, 2009; Saulsbury et al. 2011)
- Older students cheat less (Kisamore et al. 2007)
- Students cheat less in private and religious institutions (Molnar Kletke, & Jenkel, 2009)

# Sample and procedure

- 384 students completed the Academic Integrity survey self-report questionnaire (McCabe et al., 2001)
- We analyzed the proceedings of 24 academic misconduct cases (2015)

# Survey results

- 60% of students think that the incidence of academic misconduct ranges from sometimes to very often
- 45% stated that they had witnessed misconduct but 98% stated they had never reported such a case
- social science students admitted to less academic misconduct than natural science students
- First year students admitted to less academic misconduct than second and third year students
- Hebrew speaking students admitted to significantly less academic misconduct than Arabic speaking students
- students who did national service admitted to significantly less academic misconduct than those who did not

# Disciplinary hearing files

- Most were filed against first year students (67%).
- Most were from the science faculty (62%)
- Half of students were Hebrew speakers and half were Arabic speakers, only 16% of the students in the college are Arabic speakers
- Arab speaking students average age = 21.5 Hebrew speaking average age = 24.5
- Hebrew speaking students tended to admit guilt, while Arab speaking students denied being guilty
- Hebrew speaking students explained their behavior by saying that regulations and policies were not clear to them
- Arabic speaking students used external factors as explanations for their transgressions.

# Conclusions

- It is possible and worthwhile to identify groups at risk for academic misconduct
- Understanding cultural factors are crucial
- minority students oriented to extrinsic values (Gross 2013)
- A collective orientation rather than an individualistic outlook
- Arabic speakers, younger, less experienced less prepared and more afraid of failure and the disgrace they perceive it brings

# Recommendations

- Arabic speakers particularly need more academic, practical and emotional support
- So that they can say: My goal is mastery and I can do this! I don't need to cheat