

Instructors battle cheating...

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Mehle said this has lowered the grading standards because graders are required to know many more versions. But, he said, "a third of the students still flunk and two-thirds still get A's or A-pluses."

Mehle said the most common type of cheating in his course was the use of crib notes, a collection of information on a small piece of paper.

"Cheating is a desperation move by students who don't have good study skills and feel they need an unfair advantage over other students," he said.

A dramatic change has occurred in the number of cheating incidences reported from the psychology class since its reorganization, Mehle said.

"It has just about dried up compared to other semesters," said Mehle, who claims about a 90 percent decrease in the number of cheating incidences.

However, he said, bribes have been offered to teaching assistants several times this semester. He quoted one student saying, "How much will it take, I'm serious, to get you to change my grade?" Students even threaten the lives of his teaching assistants. Mehle said, all of which violates the university's Code of Conduct.

Mehle said people forge his name to get into the course. He

said he normally does not take these cases before the Judicial Board. In order to alleviate this problem, he wants to increase enrollment by 20 percent and thereby not turn down any students who wish to take the class.

Sisson, who published an article on cheating in the Winter 1983 issue of Blue Print, a college of engineering and technology publication, said he is aware of a reluctance on the part of some professors to get involved.

"I have on several occasions," Sisson said, "reported incidences of academic dishonesty to the teacher and chairman, and have met with opposition from (them)."

Sisson said the chairman told him that if the teacher would not do anything, there was nothing he could do.

On another occasion, two students collaborated on a lab re-write which, Sisson said, was a "black and white" situation of cheating, according to the syllabus. Sisson said when he confronted the teacher with it, the instructor was hesitant and did not want to get involved.

Sisson said not all cheating is clearly defined; there exists a gray area as well. He gave an example of sources being improperly used, which constitutes plagiarism, but the intent is difficult to prove.

Mehle, who claims he has never lost an appeal, said preparation

for Judicial Board hearings are time consuming and emotionally draining. To provide proof of academic dishonesty, Mehle said, he brings in witnesses, statements and documents. He said the paper work and scheduling of witnesses takes about 10 to 15 hours of preparation.

"It is understandable to me why some professors would look the other way," Mehle said, "but I think I owe it to the honest students to detect cheaters."

Mehle also said he owes it to the cheaters to be fairly punitive. "I try to prosecute appropriately," he said. "Not too much, not too little."

Although he has met with obstinance from some faculty members, Sisson said he has received support from some instructors. His Blue Print article raised people's consciousness and produced positive effects in his classes, he said.

Sisson said one change instructors have made to prevent "gray area" academic dishonesty is to outline specific rules in their syllabi. One instructor changed policy in the middle of the semester because of student complaints on the potential for cheating, Sisson said.

If teachers do not want to confront cheaters, then they should remove the potential and make it impossible to cheat, Sisson said.

Of all the reasons for cheating, the general consensus of those

interviewed was that people cheat because of pressures to get good grades and to maintain a high grade point average.

Harris said the emphasis on GPA only makes things worse.

Sisson said class priority in some colleges (for example business administration) is based on a student's GPA. Some forms of financial aid also are based upon merit, he said.

"These are the pressures which create the need to cheat," Sisson said.

Sisson said he is concerned with the effect cheating has on the institution.

"One or two cheaters in a small class can raise the grading curve immensely," he said. "If cheating is ignored it will tend to snowball and create incompetency in the field down the line."

Cheating lessens the quality of education and lessens the respect of the institution in the job market," Sisson said.

Sisson said this is why he advocates students, who have concrete evidence, turning in cheaters and contacting the Division of Student Life for guidance. He said records kept by the division will prevent repeat offenders from slipping by.

'Hub' of UNL judicial process tries to instill academic integrity

By Kevin Dugan

Daily Nebraskan Staff Reporter

LuAnn Krager of the Division of Student Life, says that unless students have a sense of academic integrity, grades and pride are meaningless.

Krager, the "hub" of UNL's judicial process, works with students suspected of violating the university's Code of Conduct.

Once evidence of code violation is obtained, Krager sends notice to the student citing the code number and giving an explanation. She tells the students their rights and has them come to her office to give their account of the situation.

Students are given the right of due process, Krager said. There is no anonymous activity; the accused get to face their accusers.

She then works with both parties and, depending on the severity of the complaint, works out a resolution or refers the case to the Judicial Board. Krager said she applies a developmental philosophy to her job. Actions which are quickly met with consequences become a better learning experience for the student, she said.

In an instance where, because of naivete, a freshman follows the bad advice of an upper-classman and forges an instructor's signature to get a class, Krager said, she would probably resort to passive disciplinary action like a warning or perhaps academic probation.

In the case of repeated offenses or more serious and blatant ones, such as changing grades on a document, Krager said she would apply more active disciplinary action like academic or personal counseling, or else send the case before the Judicial Board.

The Judicial Board, which consists of five students and four faculty members, reserves the power of expulsion. However, Krager said, "it is more likely the student will be suspended than expelled. We are not a busting unit."

Krager said she arranges the Judicial Board hearings. Though

she is not part of the deliberation, she monitors the hearing, gives the record of events and schedules counseling if deemed necessary. Once the board makes a decision, participants are given three days to appeal, she said.

All of this is done to get students to face their actions, to represent themselves and to deal with the logical consequences of bad decisions, Krager said.

All meetings and hearings are confidential, unless a student signs a release waiver for professional school or a job application, Krager said. Sanctions are kept private and hearings kept closed unless the student wants to bring a

friend or counsel, but the student must speak for themselves, she said.

"We really work at being protective of student information. That's first and foremost," Krager said.

The files are not completely confidential, however.

UNL faculty have limited access to the files, Krager said. First, they must explain their interest in a particular student's file and how it relates to their helping the student. Then if the request is deemed worthy, Krager said, some specific information may be released.

CORRECTION

In our Monday, November 26th ad in the Daily Nebraskan, we inadvertently priced all Big Red clothing and Trivial Pursuit at 20% off.

We regret any problems this might have caused.

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The Authors revealed Saturday, December 1. See Friday's Journal/Star and Daily Nebraskan for details.

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