

Academic corruption : Plagiarism

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Academic corruption

- Academics are respected for their intellectual contributions, honesty and integrity in teaching, grading students and for their publications
- Academic corruption in various forms has increased in the recent past
- Academic corruption and unethical practices have dented the image of the professoriate and institutions

Forms of academic corruption

- Producing fake qualification certificates
- Awarding degrees to underserving candidates
- Bribe for grades/marks
- Seeking sexual favors for grades/marks
- Selling degrees
- Ghost writing in exams and doctoral theses
- Plagiarism

Who engages in plagiarism?

- Plagiarism is an act of stealing someone else's work without acknowledging and thus depriving the original author the ownership
- The professoriate engage in plagiarism while writing articles, books and other publications
- The student Plagiarism is reflected in cheating while writing assignments, dissertations and publications

Types of plagiarism

- Copy and paste plagiarism
- Word switch plagiarism – some words from the source material is changed
- Idea plagiarism –take someone's idea and present it as your own
- Authorship plagiarism – puts one's name on a work done by somebody else
- Plagiarism is on the increase with the wide-spread use of technology in teaching and learning

Forms of plagiarism by students

- More visible in take home assignments than in tests and exams
- More visible in theses and articles
- Submitting other's assignment as your own
- Failure to acknowledge the source
- Some one writes for you
- Paraphrasing an argument without acknowledging the author

How to detect student plagiarism?

- Reading of the text will reveal plagiarism
- The plagiarized parts will be different in style than other parts
- Generally no grammatical mistakes in some part of the text is an indication of plagiarism
- Rely on anti-plagiarism softwares to detect plagiarism

Why students plagiarize?

- Inadequate time to study , fierce competition and fear of failure
- Laziness to read and write and eagerness to invest time in other activities
- Internet materials are more organized and scores better
- Some students do not know how to credit an author
- Many students do not consider that copying from internet is cheating
- Some do not consider plagiarism as unethical
- A belief that students will not be caught since lecturers will not have time to read all the assignments
- Poor academic writing skills is an important reason

Extent of plagiarism

- The extent of plagiarism is around 17-20 per cent
- Plagiarism is higher in the first assignments than in their subsequent assignments
- Many anti-plagiarism soft wares are in use in many universities
- Studies show that after plagiarism soft wares are introduced, the level of plagiarism was reduced in many universities

Punishment for plagiarism

- The punishment for plagiarism varies - some cultures are more tolerant than others
- Punishment for student plagiarism can be re-submission of assignments, cancellation of grades, dismissal, withdrawal of degrees
- Punishment for plagiarism can be serious and can end up in court cases
- Plagiarism punished or not leads to humiliation and loss of respect