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**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR:
AN EXAMINATION OF PREVALENCE, POLICY, AND PRACTICE**

By
Jennifer L. Zubick

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
Through the Department of Sociology and Anthropology
in Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
at the University of Windsor

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Abstract

An examination of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor was conducted in order to make recommendations for changes to existing policies and procedures. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 339 students and 167 faculty members. And, a process of content analysis was used for a comparison of institutional policies and procedures.

The results have indicated that academic misconduct is not being deterred by existing policies. Academic misconduct, though largely undetected, is prevalent at the University of Windsor. This may be partly attributed to the finding that there is some degree of inconsistency in the classifications of academic misconduct by students and faculty members. Students seem to be unaware of actual sanctions for academic misconduct, and faculty members indicated that the current policies are not effective. As well, the procedures used by the University of Windsor are substantially different than the procedures utilized by other academic institutions.

Recommendations include revisions to the current policies and procedures that are in effect at the University of Windsor. As well, there is a clear need to educate the members of the University community about academic integrity and academic misconduct.

Dedicated to my Mom and Dad...

Thank you for everything!

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Chapter One

Introduction

Occurrences of cheating behaviour¹ can be detected within various types of social interaction including business, education, leisure and interpersonal relationships. In fact, studies have repeatedly confirmed the 1928 findings of Hartshorne and May that 'nearly everyone cheats sometime' (Leming, 1978). Due to the frequency of cheating there has been a need to investigate this behaviour within an assortment of social settings, and across a variety of conditions and circumstances. A reoccurring theme within the research literature has been the examination of cheating behaviour within post-secondary educational settings. This form of cheating, commonly known as academic misconduct or academic dishonesty, has appeared in journal articles for more than 55 years (see Drake, 1941).

Presently, academic misconduct is considered to be a major problem in higher education (Davis, Grover, Becker & McGregor, 1992; Jendrek, 1989; Jendrek, 1992; Singhal, 1982). In fact, published accounts suggest that incidents of cheating have escalated (Davis et al., 1992), and that it has reached the level of an 'epidemic' (Haines, Diekhoff, LaBeff and Clark, 1986). Not only does cheating compromise the learning and evaluation processes, and provide an unfair advantage to cheaters (Michaels & Miethe, 1989), but it may also have the long term consequence of producing unethical

¹ According to *The New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary of the English Language* the term 'cheat' can be defined as, "to trick or deceive; to play a game not according to the rules; to use unfair methods" (1988:167). When applied to academic misconduct, the term 'cheating' can be defined as, "a fraudulent means of achieving the scarce valued resources (e.g., higher grades) allocated within that setting" (Michaels & Miethe, 1989:870).

practitioners (Saunders, 1993).

However, research results verify a high frequency of instances of academic misconduct (Bishop, 1993; Haines et al., 1986; Karlins, Michaels & Podlogar, 1988; Michaels and Miethe, 1989; Singhal, 1982), and therefore may imply that it has become ‘normalized’ or that it is a form of socially acceptable or at least condoned behaviour. Since noncheaters are in the minority, it suggests that “cheating is normative based on a statistical conception of deviance” (Michaels & Miethe, 1989:881-2). Indeed, the evidence from these various studies seem to suggest that cheating is acceptable / normal behaviour.

By contrast, Sacco (1988) would classify cheating as a deviant act² because it falls within his definition of the sociology of deviance. Specifically, the sociology of deviance can be defined as: “the study of social conflict between those who behave in particular ways and those who seek to control their behaviour” (Sacco, 1988:3). Therefore, for the purpose of this research, academic misconduct will be seen as a social conflict between the students who cheat and the members of the university community who attempt to enforce various degrees and levels of academic honesty. As such, it will be addressed and analyzed as a form of deviance.

The University of Windsor

Each year, at the University of Windsor, roughly a dozen cases of academic misconduct are brought before the Judicial Panel (Price, 1993). Additionally, the Dean

² The term deviance can be defined as, “a violation of the community’s moral norms” (Stebbins, 1988:2).

of Student Affairs meets with approximately 40 cases that do not reach the Judicial Panel (Price, 1993). These figures illustrate that only 50 cases (which represents less than 0.32% of the total student population of 15,888³) are accounted for on an annual basis. Therefore, unless the University of Windsor is an exception to the findings put forth by academic research, a significantly large proportion of cases remain undetected, or a high proportion of these cases are dealt with on an informal level instead of being 'properly' reported and resolved.

Although very few students are caught committing an academic offence, this should not be seen as an indication that academic misconduct is absent from the University of Windsor. According to the *Third Annual Report: Ombudsperson and Race Relations Officer*, other students are very concerned about cheating. In fact, students have expressed their concern by registering seven complaints to the Ombudsperson's office during the period of July 1, 1991 to June 30, 1992 (Ramcharan, 1992). While seven complaints may not seem to be a significant level, it is important to note that the Ombudsperson's office is only one of many possible routes for a complaint to be registered (ex. other possibilities include complaints to: the instructor, the Head of the Department, the Dean of the Department, the Dean of Student Affairs, the Vice-President Academic, etc...). The importance of these complaints should not be undermined. They were sufficient and severe enough for the Ombudsperson's *Third Annual Report* to state that,

³ This figure represents the total all of part time and full time students registered at the University of Windsor during the 1994-1995 academic year (as indicated by *Maclean's: Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine*, November 20, 1995 [hereinafter *Maclean's*]).

“...the issue that has caused us the most concern [as related to academic issues] is the increase in complaints about cheating in examinations. This problem has been brought to our attention by both members of the professoriate and the student body. Our concern is that if not nipped in the bud by corrective measures immediately, this type of behaviour can have a demoralizing effect on the general student body. While it is an area of behaviour that must be dealt with sensitivity, offenders must be dealt with severely. I am therefore recommending that the Vice-President Academic and the Dean of Student Affairs, jointly review the existing policy on cheating in examinations and if possible revise it to provide ‘stronger disciplinary teeth’.” (Ramcharan, 1992:8).

In response to these recommendations, *The Fourth Annual Report: Ombudsperson and Race Relations Officer, July 1, 1992 - June 30, 1993* indicated that,

“The Dean of Student Affairs has established a special committee, with representation from faculty and students to examine this issue, and report to Senate as soon as possible. This will be done as part of the revisions to Senate By-Law 31 [and 51].” (Ramcharan, 1993:2).

However, despite these reports and recommendations, there have been no formal revisions to *Bylaw 31* since the last amendment in 1992.

These bylaws set out the policies and procedures which govern student affairs at the University of Windsor. The policies have been established in accordance with the *University of Windsor Act (1962-63, amended 1969)* (cited in *University of Windsor, Senate Bylaw 31, [hereinafter Bylaw 31]*), in order to ensure that the objectives and purposes of the university are met by all members of the University community.

Specifically, the objectives and purposes of the university are:

- a) The advancement of learning and the dissemination of knowledge; and
- b) The intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and physical development of its members and students and the betterment of society.

Research Objectives

The primary purpose of the present study is to examine and explain academic misconduct at the University of Windsor in order to determine if the objectives and purposes of the University are reflected within the current policies and practices. Additionally, in recognition of the potential for a future review and revision of *Bylaw 31*, this study seeks to recommend changes to present policies and procedures in order to ensure that the needs of the University community are being met.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Overview

In accordance with research conducted by Michaels and Miethe (1989), a basic underlying assumption of the current research is that academic cheating is comparable to other forms of deviant behaviour and can therefore be explained by similar mechanisms. Attempts to explain academic misconduct have been put forth by many theoretical applications and interpretations, including: social control theory (Eve & Bromley, 1981), social learning theory (Lanza-Kaduce & Klug, 1986), and neutralization theory (LaBeff, Clark, Haines, & Diekhoff, 1990; McCabe, 1992). However, since this present research seeks to investigate the relationships between sanctioning policies / practices and cheating behaviour, it is proposed that the deterrence theory of deviance can provide insight regarding the prevalence, policies and practices of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor.

Essentially, deterrence theory states a particular behaviour is inhibited or deterred in direct proportion to the perceived probability and severity of punishment for that behaviour (Gibbs, 1975). The theoretical basis of the deterrence doctrine focuses upon the notion of punishment and the mechanisms of social control in an attempt to explain deviant / criminal behaviour (Michaels & Miethe, 1989). A prime example of deterrence theory is the criminal justice system which is fundamentally based upon the notion that the fear of punishment will cause people to obey the law (Tittle, 1980). Deterrence theory can be summarized as a theory which appeals to common sense, such that “most individuals prefer to avoid prison and thus are discouraged from engaging in criminal

behaviour, especially behaviour that is likely to be detected and punished.” (Miller & Anderson, 1986:418).

General deterrence refers to the overall effects of the threat of punishment, and specific deterrence refers to the effects of punishment on the individual offender (Gibbs, 1975). For the purpose of this research, the deterrence doctrine will be discussed in terms of general deterrence. Such that, the awareness and enforcement of the University of Windsor’s academic misconduct policies may deter the overall student population from engaging in cheating behaviour.

While sociologists have been interested in deterrence for several generations, the research evidence has not been conclusive (Tittle & Rowe, 1973). Considerable controversy surrounds the effectiveness of deterrence oriented laws (Miller & Anderson, 1986). With regard to the type of sanction, some research has found more deterrence from informal sanctions than from formal sanctions (Paternoster 1987; Paternoster and Iovanni 1986; Tittle 1980b, cited in Ward & Tittle, 1993:52). However, Ward and Tittle (1993) found that informal sanctions do not deter instances of academic misconduct.

The effect that sanctioned threats has upon deterrence is dependent upon many factors, including the type, and severity, of crime / deviance that has been committed. For example, the sanctioned threat of capital punishment does not seem to empirically have a deterrent effect in cases of homicide (Grasmick & Bursik, 1990). However, minor crimes, like those of parking violations, seem to be deterred by an increase in severity and certainty of penalties (Chambliss, 1966).

Since academic misconduct can be viewed as falling in between the homicide /

parking violation continuum, it is proposed that many aspects of deterrence theory will be applicable to this issue. Therefore, as related to academic misconduct, deterrence theory suggests that for misconduct to be inhibited, cheaters must perceive that they will be caught and that severe penalties will be imposed (Gibbs, 1975, cited in McCabe & Trevino, 1993:526). As such, cheating should vary inversely with the perceived probability and severity of possible punishments for cheating (Michaels & Miethe, 1989). This position has been supported by the research findings of several studies. In a test of academic misconduct and the deterrence hypothesis, Tittle and Rowe (1973) found that sanctions play an important role in the maintenance of conformity and social order in an academic institution. Likewise, in another discussion of the deterrence doctrine, Miller and Anderson (1986) explain that increases in the likelihood of conviction and sanction prove to be effective as a means of deterrence. Since academic misconduct can often be concealed from faculty members, students' perceptions about the certainty of being caught may also rely upon their anticipation of another student reporting the incident (McCabe & Trevino, 1993).

Further studies have indicated that students are aware of the effects that deterrence has upon behaviour. Specifically, a survey of students revealed that students view "the lack of publicized discipline as an incentive for would-be cheaters, and advised that the mere knowledge of consequences would provoke some students to reconsider their actions" (Haines, LaBeff, Clark and Diekhoff, 1986:15). Consistent with these views, a recent comparison of American and Australian university students determined that a sizeable portion of students from both of these cultures felt that announced

penalties will deter cheating (Davis, Noble, Zak, and Dreyer (1994).

In accordance with Jendrek's (1989) study of faculty reactions to academic dishonesty, faculty members' attitudes and responses to cheating are directly related to student behaviours. Specifically,

“if faculty members are permissive and do little to punish the offender, students may continue to engage in academic dishonesty without fear of punitive action. On the other hand, if students know that faculty members follow a mandated procedure that requires the punishment of academically dishonest behaviour, they may be less likely to engage in such behaviours.” (p. 401).

Since the delivery of a sanctioned threat results in a significant decrease in cheating activity (Tittle & Rowe, 1973), the general deterrence perspective will be incorporated into the present research. It will be assumed that if penalties are proportional and probable, then the punishment will outweigh the reward (Tittle, 1980). Students would therefore be expected to refrain from engaging in cheating behaviour.

Aimrin and Hawkins (1973) state that the deterrence doctrine assumes that individuals are actually aware of the sanctions (cited in Miller & Anderson, 1986:420). As such, before applying the deterrence doctrine, this research will investigate whether there is an actual awareness of the sanction for academic misconduct. If there is a lack of awareness with regard to sanctions, it will be discussed in terms of the *need* for students to be aware of policies in order for deterrence to be effective, rather than as an explanation of the existence of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor.

Chapter Three

Methodological Overview

When conducting sociological research it is advantageous to utilize more than one methodological approach because this helps to reduce researcher bias and it provides a deeper and clearer understanding of what is being investigated. In order to achieve a deep and clear understanding of academic misconduct two main methodological procedures were utilized in the present study. Specifically, these procedures were:

- 1) the administration of questionnaires in order to collect original data, and
- 2) a process of content analysis in order to examine existing policies, and procedures

This chapter is devoted to an overview of the two methodological approaches utilized in the present study. The following pages include an outline of the content of the questionnaires and a description of the participants, as well as an overview of the content analysis procedure. Additionally, specific methodological procedures will be discussed within each chapter.

Questionnaire Data

Since questionnaires are especially useful in collecting data and describing characteristics of large populations (Babbie, 1989), two separate questionnaires were designed for the purpose of collecting data from a significant proportion of the university community. During the spring and summer of 1995, these questionnaires were distributed to 491 faculty members, and 339 students at the University of Windsor. The

faculty questionnaire was sent to instructors through inter-campus mail and yielded a 34.2% response rate (Number =167). The student questionnaire was administered to groups of students during their regularly scheduled classes (Number = 339). The questionnaires that were distributed to students and faculty members sought data on:

- 1) the types of behaviour that constitute cheating,
- 2) the prevalence of cheating on campus,
- 3) knowledge of the policies and procedures that exist at the university,
- 4) practices and attitudes toward academic misconduct.

The faculty questionnaire and the student questionnaire, though similar, were not identical. Part A (Question 1 through Question 20) was the same in both sets of questionnaires, however Part B of each questionnaire dealt with questions which were more specific to the respondents' status as either a student or as a member of the faculty.

Student Questionnaire

In order to maximize the response rate, the student questionnaire was administered during class time. An attempt was made to achieve a representative sample of the university community by administering the questionnaire to classes within six of the faculties at the University of Windsor⁴ (Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Social Science, Faculty of Science, Faculty of Business, Faculty of Engineering, and Faculty of Law), and to students in all stages of undergraduate careers (First Year, Second Year, Third Year, Fourth Year, and Greater Than Fourth Year). During the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher verbally advised all students that participation in the study

⁴ Representatives from the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Human Kinetics indicated that their faculties would be unable to take part in this study.

was entirely on a voluntary basis and that all responses would remain anonymous.

Part A of the questionnaire presented 20 scenarios and students were asked to evaluate each scenario in order to decide if the described activity constituted an act of academic misconduct. These scenarios consisted of a variety of 'behaviour patterns' (eg. examination behaviours, collaboration behaviours, and plagiarism behaviours). Part B of the questionnaire consisted of 9 additional questions in order to address personal opinions and experiences with academic misconduct. All questions were of a fixed choice format and as such, responses were recorded on a multiple choice response sheet (computer form). While a few of the respondents added additional information (comments, suggestions, etc...), some of the respondents did not provide responses to all items. Therefore, there are instances of missing data, and there is a variation in the number of responses for each question. (For a copy of the verbal description of the study, the Student Questionnaire, and a response sheet see Appendix A. For a breakdown of student participants see Table 3.1).

Faculty Questionnaire

A list of 'active' faculty members was obtained from the Faculty Association at the University of Windsor. All active faculty members were sent an explanatory letter, a questionnaire, and a response sheet. The explanatory letter outlined the purpose and nature of the study, listed contact names / numbers, and provided detailed instructions.

Part A of the faculty questionnaire was identical to Part A of the student questionnaire, in which twenty specific scenarios were listed and respondents were asked

to indicate which of the items they considered to be academic misconduct. Part B consisted of 8 additional fixed choice format questions which probed personal experiences with academic misconduct. As with the student questionnaire, there were instances of additional comments and of missing data which caused a variance in the number of responses for each question.

In order to maximize confidentiality, the questionnaire was sent out and returned by campus mail. In attempt to maximize the response rate, several weeks after the original questionnaires were distributed, reminders were sent to each department, and messages were sent via the Internet to all faculty members who had an e-mail address listed in the campus directory. (For a copy of the explanatory letter, the faculty questionnaire, and a response sheet see Appendix B. For a breakdown of the faculty participants see Table 3.2).

Content Analysis

Institutional policies from four Ontario universities were examined in order to analyze differences that exist between academic institutions. Specifically, the 1995 undergraduate calendars from the University of Windsor, University of Guelph, University of Waterloo, and Carleton University⁵ were examined for their references to the issue of academic misconduct. Following the criteria outlined in a study conducted by Weaver, Davis, Look, Buzzanga, and Neal (1991), each policy was read carefully and

⁵ Schools were chosen based on: comparable size to the University of Windsor, comparable geographic location, willingness to participate in the study, and the classifications utilized in the *Maclean's Annual Ranking of Canadian Universities 1995 (Maclean's, 1995)*.

dissected into its component parts. Each policy will be discussed in terms of its clarity and completeness, and has been used in order to make suggestions for improvements to policies at the University of Windsor.

In addition, each of these universities were contacted and asked to provide a copy of their procedures for handling incidents of academic misconduct. These procedures will be summarized in order to make comparisons to Windsor's procedures, and to provide recommendations for change.

The last component of the content analysis phase involves an examination of the sanctioning practices at the University of Windsor. The Registrar's office was contacted and asked to compile a summary of the imposed sanctions for any academic offences that have recently gone before the university's Judicial Panel.

Methodological Limitations

Methodologically, the majority of the studies relating to academic misconduct have been conducted utilizing the self-report measurement procedure. Although the validity and reliability of this measure is questionable, studies have typically indicated that self-reports of deviance among young people are generally good. Specifically, Akers, Massey, Clarke and Lauer (1983) found self-report measures to be accurate in a study of adolescent smoking behaviour and deviance. And furthermore, research on adolescent drug and alcohol use has indicated high validity and reliability, particularly when confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed (Radosevich, Lanza-Kaduce, Akers and Krohn, 1979). As related to academic misconduct, it is believed that "due to the

nature of the subject matter...students would perceive less threat and thus be more honest [when using self report methods] than if subjected to alternative techniques for data gathering” (Haines et al., 1986:14). Furthermore, Michaels and Miethe (1989) suggest that any inaccuracies in self-reports of academic misconduct are attributed to an *underreporting* of actual behaviours, thereby not inflating perceptions of cheating. Therefore, although survey research may be somewhat artificial and potentially superficial (Babbie, 1989), it is “probably the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data for describing a population too large to observe directly” (Babbie, 1989:237).

Table 3.1**Breakdown of the Student Participants**

	Percentage	Number
Faculty		
Arts	11.2	38
Social Science	28.0	95
Science	16.5	56
Business	16.8	57
Engineering	15.0	51
Law	12.4	42
Academic Year		
First	25.4	86
Second	13.0	44
Third	42.2	143
Fourth	17.1	58
Greater than Fourth	1.5	5
Not Indicated	0.8	3
Gender		
Male	48.4	164
Female	50.7	172
Not Indicated	0.9	3

Table 3.2

Breakdown of the Faculty Participants

	Percentage	Number
Faculty		
Arts	14.3%	24
Social Science	33.9%	57
Science	19.6%	33
Business	8.3%	14
Education	2.4%	4
Engineering	4.8%	8
Human Kinetics	6.5%	11
Law	2.4%	4
Not Indicated	7.7%	12
Gender		
Male	64.3%	108
Female	35.1%	59

Chapter Four

Classification Of Academic Misconduct

A universally accepted definition and interpretation of academic misconduct is absent from the literature, thereby making it difficult to generalize research results to all academic institutions. A general definition of academic misconduct could be considered “a violation of an institution’s policy on honesty” (Weaver et al., 1991:302), but it is necessary to realize that policies vary between universities and that each academic institution has a unique interpretation of academic offences.

A possible explanation for the high rates of academic misconduct may be that students are unaware of what is considered to be cheating. In a survey administered to 681 undergraduate students at a south-western state university, Eve and Bromley (1981) found that there was “a surprising lack of consensus among students on precisely which activities their faculty members are likely to see as forbidden” (p.20). And, as determined by Hawley’s (1984) survey of 425 undergraduate students, many of the problems that have been labelled as academic misconduct are actually ‘simple ignorance’. This study also revealed that the lack of student education about academic integrity is responsible for some of the academic misconduct found within the university system (Hawley, 1984).

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to explain how academic misconduct is understood by students and faculty members at the University of Windsor. Theoretically, deterrence theory would suggest that if behaviours are to be deterred by a corresponding sanction, students and faculty members would first have to recognize that these specific

behaviours are prohibited. Therefore, the pages which follow will include student and faculty member classifications and assessments of specific behaviours in order to determine their views on prohibited behaviours.

Method

The data collected in Part A of both questionnaires is utilized in the present analysis. Within Part A of the questionnaires, students and faculty members were asked to indicate how they would classify twenty different scenarios. The response categories that they were asked to choose from are as follows:

- *yes, this is an example of academic misconduct*
- *no, this is not an example of academic misconduct*
- *unsure if this is an example of academic misconduct*

Results

The results for the classifications of academic misconduct are discussed in the pages which follow and these results are summarized in Table 4.1 (student and faculty responses on the classification of academic misconduct), Figure 4.1 (all 'yes' responses), Figure 4.2 ('no' responses), and Figure 4.3 (all 'uncertain' responses).

Scenario #1: Copying from another student's exam

According to the overall sample, 97.1% of respondents classified this scenario as academic misconduct. This figure includes an extremely high percentage of faculty

members (99.4%) and students (95.9%). In fact, none of the faculty members who were surveyed provided a 'no' response for this scenario, and only 1.5% of students indicated a 'no' response. 'Unsure' responses were also very low for both faculty members and students (0.6% and 2.4% respectively).

Scenario #2: *Allowing another student to copy from your exam*

Overall, 90.4% of all students and faculty members believed that this scenario should be classified as an example of academic misconduct. A greater percentage of faculty members (98.2%) made this classification than did students (86.4%). While none (0%) of the faculty members provided a 'no' response, 7.1% of students indicated that this scenario is not a form of academic misconduct. Students indicated slightly more uncertainty for this scenario than were faculty members (6.5% and 1.8% respectively).

Scenario #3: *Writing an exam for another student*

Overall, 96.3% of all those surveyed saw this scenario as an example of academic misconduct. Both students and faculty members indicated a high proportion of 'yes' responses, with 95.0% of students and 98.8% of faculty members classifying this scenario as misconduct. Very low percentages of faculty members and students indicated 'no' responses or 'unsure' responses for this scenario (faculty members: no = 0.6%, unsure = 0.6%; students: no = 2.1%, unsure = 2.7%).

Scenario #4: *Getting questions / answers from someone who wrote the same exam earlier that day*

According to the overall sample, 53.0% of respondents identified this scenario as an example of academic misconduct, and 27.3% indicated that it is not misconduct. There was a major difference between faculty member and student responses, in that 77.4% of faculty members in comparison to 41.3% of students provided a 'yes' response. There was a relatively high percentage of 'no' and 'unsure' responses among student respondents (36.9% and 21.8% respectively). And, a much lower proportion of 'no' and 'unsure' responses among faculty members (8.3% and 12.5% respectively).

Scenario #5: *Getting questions or answers from someone who wrote the same exam last year*

Overall, 19.4% of those surveyed saw this scenario as an example of academic misconduct. Once again, faculty members were more likely than students to classify this scenario as a form of misconduct (faculty members = 26.8%, students = 15.9%). A high proportion of respondents indicated that this example is not a form of academic misconduct (67.2%), with 74.0% of the students and 54.8% of the faculty members indicating a 'no' classification. This scenario produced quite a bit of uncertainty among faculty members with 17.3% indicating an 'unsure' response, in comparison to 9.7% of students who indicated that there were uncertain as to whether this scenario was an example of academic misconduct.

Scenario #6: *Studying from an old exam that was never distributed*

Overall, only 9.8% of all respondents saw this scenario as an example of academic misconduct. Faculty members were more likely than students to make this classification ('yes' responses: faculty members = 18.5%, students = 5.6%). The majority of faculty members and students indicated that this scenario is not an example of academic misconduct (56.0% and 78.5%). As well, there was fair bit of uncertainty among faculty members and students (23.8% and 15.9% respectively).

Scenario #7: *Studying with friends who are in the same course*

According to the overall sample, 2.8% of the respondents indicated that this behaviour is an example of academic misconduct, and 96.1% indicated that it is not misconduct. Low proportions of students and faculty members classified this scenario as academic misconduct (students = 3.5%, faculty members = 1.2%). The majority of students and faculty members indicated a 'no' response for this example (students = 94.7%, faculty members = 98.8%). There was no (0%) uncertainty among faculty members, and only 1.8% uncertainty among faculty members.

Scenario #8: *Working on an assignment with other students when the instructor doesn't allow it*

Overall, 57.0% of those surveyed cited this scenario as an example of academic misconduct. Higher percentages of faculty members classified this scenario as academic misconduct than did students (81.5% and 44.5% respectively). While the majority of

faculty members and students provided a 'yes' response, there was an interesting split with the remainder of the responses (faculty members: no = 5.4%, unsure = 11.9%; students: no = 33.9%, unsure = 21.2%).

Scenario #9: *Paying someone to write an assignment for you*

In total, 90.4% of the respondents indicated that this scenario constituted academic misconduct. An overwhelming 98.2% of faculty members, compared with 86.4% of students classified this scenario as academic misconduct. However, 8.0% of students, and only 1.2% of faculty members indicated that this is not an example of academic misconduct. There was a low proportion of 'unsure' responses for both groups (faculty members = 0.6%, students = 5.3%).

Scenario #10: *Paying someone to research an assignment for you*

Overall, 63.7% of the respondents cited this as an example of academic misconduct. Faculty members were more likely to classify this as misconduct than were students (73.2% and 58.7% respectively). A large percentage of students (28.3%) indicated that this scenario is not academic misconduct, while only 10.7% of faculty members made a 'no' response. A fair proportion faculty members and students indicated that they were 'unsure' as to whether this scenario was an example of academic misconduct (15.5% and 13.0% respectively).

Scenario #11: *Paying someone to type an assignment for you*

According to the overall sample, only 3.7% of respondents indicated that this scenario is an example of academic misconduct, and 91.9% stated that it is not misconduct. In particular, 3.0% of faculty members and 4.1% of students classified this behaviour as academic misconduct. A large majority of both faculty members and students provided a 'no' response for this scenario (94.0% and 90.90% respectively), while small proportions of both groups indicated 'unsure' responses (3.0% and 5.0% respectively).

Scenario #12: *Submitting one of your essays to more than one course without permission*

In total, 54.6% of the sample considered this scenario to be academic misconduct. While 78.6% of faculty members saw this behaviour as an example of misconduct, only 42.5% of students cited it as such. Student responses were split among the three possible categories with 42.5% citing it as misconduct, 37.5% indicating that it is not misconduct, and 20.1% indicating uncertainty. Whereas, only 7.7% of faculty members indicated that it not misconduct, and only 13.1% expressed uncertainty.

Scenario #13: *Submitting a friend's essay with a few changes*

Overall, 81.3% of all respondents indicated that this scenario is an example of academic misconduct. And, faculty members were more likely than students to classify this scenario as academic misconduct (97.0%, 73.5% respectively). Students indicated a

larger proportion of 'no' and 'unsure' responses than did faculty members (students: no = 14.5%, unsure = 12.1%; faculty members: no = 1.8%, unsure = 1.2%).

Scenario #14: *Using a friend's old essay to get ideas and references*

According to the overall sample, 6.1% of all those surveyed cited this as academic misconduct, and 82.3% indicated that it is not misconduct. Both faculty members and students tended to indicate that this is not an example of academic misconduct (78.0% and 84.4% respectively). Only 3.8% of students, and 10.7% of faculty members provided a 'yes' response for this question. Faculty members and students had an equal proportion of 'unsure' responses (11.3% and 11.5% respectively).

Scenario #15: *Copying a few sentences without footnoting in a paper*

Overall, 64.0% of the respondents indicated that this scenario should be viewed as academic misconduct. A much higher proportion of faculty members as compared to students responded 'yes' to this scenario (82.1% and 55.2% respectively). Students indicated more 'no' responses (students = 28.0%; faculty members = 8.3%), and 'unsure' responses (students = 16.8%; faculty members = 9.5%) than did faculty members.

Scenario #16: *'Padding' a few items on a bibliography*⁶

This scenario was considered to be academic misconduct by 47.7% of all

⁶ It should be acknowledged that approximately 5 students, and 1 faculty member indicated that they didn't understand the expression 'padding'. Therefore, there may have been some degree of confusion or misunderstanding on this particular item.

respondents. Again, a much higher proportion of faculty members, as compared to students, classified this scenario as misconduct (faculty members = 59.5%, students 42.2%). This example seemed to cause some confusion amongst faculty members and students as their responses were divided among the three response categories (faculty members: yes = 59.5%, no = 13.7%, unsure = 26.2%; students: yes = 42.2%, no = 32.2%, and unsure = 25.4%).

Scenario #17: *Pretending to be sick / using a phoney excuse to miss an exam or get an extension*

According to the overall sample, 72.9% of respondents classified this scenario as academic misconduct. Faculty members were more likely than students to classify this behaviour as misconduct (83.9%, and 67.6% respectively). And, students were more likely than faculty members to provide a 'no' or 'unsure' response (students: no = 21.8%, unsure = 10.6%; faculty members: no = 6.0%, unsure = 9.5%).

Scenario #18: *Asking an instructor for help / hints that were not given to anyone else*

Overall, 19.8% of the subjects indicated that this scenario is an example of academic misconduct. Roughly equal proportions of faculty members and students cited this behaviour as such (faculty members = 17.9%, students 20.9%). Both groups tended to believe that it is not misconduct, (students = 61.1%, faculty = 56.5%), yet there was also a fair bit of uncertainty (students =17.7%, faculty =25.0%).

Scenario #19: *Changing the information on an official university document*

Overall, 90.0% of all those surveyed cited this example as academic misconduct. Faculty members were more likely than students to classify this scenario as misconduct (94.6% and 87.6% respectively). Low proportions of faculty members and students indicated 'no' or 'unsure' responses (faculty members: no = 1.2%, unsure = 4.2%; students: no = 5.9%, unsure = 6.5%).

Scenario #20: *Noticing another student cheating, but not reporting it to the instructor*

Overall, 15.5% of all respondents cited this as a form of academic misconduct. A greater proportion of faculty members (22.0%) as compared to students (12.1%) provided a 'yes' response. The majority of faculty members (41.7%) expressed uncertainty, and the majority of students (52.2%) indicated that this was not an example of academic misconduct. A high proportion of students (35.1%) also expressed uncertainty. While 36.3% of faculty members indicated that this was not an example of academic misconduct.

Discussion

Although students and faculty members differed in their precise percentages of classifications, there was agreement in 4/5 of the scenarios that achieved the five highest proportions of 'yes' responses. This is consistent with the previous research of Nuss (1984) and Sims (1995) who both found that student rankings and classifications of academic misconduct were similar to those of faculty members.

Faculty members and students both provided the highest proportion of ‘yes’ responses for *copying from another student’s exam*. Interestingly, both students and faculty members provided the third highest proportion⁷ of ‘yes’ responses for the related behaviour of *allowing another student to copy from your exam*. These two scenarios are very similar, the only difference being passive vs active role assignment. In one scenario the person is taking the active role of cheating, and in the other scenario the person taking the passive role of allowing the cheating to occur. While faculty members consistently provided high percentages of ‘yes’ responses for both of these scenarios, the role differentiation is responsible for 9.5% difference in student classifications. Specifically, students were more likely to classify the active role as academic misconduct, than they were to classify the passive role as misconduct. This is consistent with Eve & Bromley’s (1981) finding that “active, initiating behaviours were more widely regarded as dishonest than were more passive, supporting behaviours” (p. 17).

The scenario which achieved the second highest proportion of ‘yes’ responses from faculty members and from students was *writing an exam for another student*. Although this behaviour is not described within the *University of Windsor Undergraduate Calendar*, ‘impersonation at an examination’ is mentioned within the University’s *Bylaw 31* as an example of misconduct. The high levels of ‘yes’ responses for this scenario may be attributed to the fact that impersonation is considered to be a criminal offence. As indicated within the *University of Western Ontario Undergraduate*

⁷ In the student classifications, this scenario tied for the third highest proportion of ‘yes’ responses with *paying someone to write an assignment for you*.

Calendar, “impersonating a candidate at an examination is also an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada” (p.32). During the late 1980’s, York University charged eight people with impersonation which provides for a summary conviction and up to \$2,000 in fines, six months in jail, or both (Crawford, 1989: A20).

Students and faculty members also strongly agreed that *paying someone to write an assignment for you* is a scenario that should be classified as academic misconduct. This form of plagiarism received a lot of media coverage in 1989 when the Metro Toronto Police conducted a large-scale investigation of essay writing services, commonly known as ‘paper mills’. Several university students were charged with using this service, and the potential penalties listed at the time of the investigation included censure, suspension, expulsion, and the possibility of rescinding a degree already granted (Holden, 1989: A20). However, even when essay writing services are involved, there can be justification mechanisms. For example, the owner of a New Jersey term-paper company rationalizes his actions and claims that “the corruption perpetrated on students by universities far outweighs the petty academic crimes of students”. This individual estimated that there are somewhere between 8-20 term paper companies who advertise in the United States (*The Detroit News*, 1995:C4). A catalogue from one of these companies lists thousands of research reports which are available for \$7.95 (U.S.) per page, or custom research which is available for \$30.00-\$35.00 per page (The Academic Research Group, Inc., 1996). As well, opportunities to commit academic misconduct have recently expanded to a web site on the Internet. Free of charge, students can download an essay from a selection of hundreds of term papers that are posted on the

web site (Tasker, 1996). Although these types of services are easily accessible and readily available, the high percentage of ‘yes’ responses seems to indicate that this type of behaviour is still considered to be deviant, and has not become normalized.

The other scenario which rounds out the ‘top five’ for the highest percentage of ‘yes’ responses for faculty members is *submitting a friend’s essay with a few changes* (97.0%). While a high proportion of students also classified this scenario as academic misconduct (73.5%), the student classifications are lower than faculty classifications by 23.5%. One possible explanation for this difference could be that the students share the blame for this scenario with the student who provided the essay. As such, their sense of responsibility may be diminished and this may not be regarded as seriously as other forms of misconduct.

And, the other scenario in the ‘top five’ for students is *changing the information on an official university document*. This scenario was actually within the ‘top six’ for faculty members, which indicates that there is a consensus with regard to the seriousness of this matter. These high rankings could partially attributed to the implications of forgery which are involved. One faculty member indicated that, “if changing the information was on a transcript then, ‘yes’ it is academic misconduct, however if it is anything else it is not academic misconduct, but it could be a criminal offence and as such, it should be reported to the police”. This behaviour is described the University’s *Bylaw 31* as an example of misconduct. Specifically the bylaw states that, “[f]orgery, alteration, or use of University documents, records or instruments of identification with intend to defraud [are all examples of misconduct]”(p. 3).

Overall, while there was a general agreement amongst faculty members and students as to which behaviours constitute academic misconduct, faculty members tended to feel more strongly about their classifications of academic misconduct than did students. This can be demonstrated by the fact that faculty members had a greater average proportion of 'yes' responses than did students (average percentage of 'yes' classifications: faculty members = 61.1%, students = 47.1%). This pattern was consistent across the majority of the scenarios. In fact, in 17/20⁸ of the scenarios, a higher percentage of faculty members classified the behaviours as academic misconduct than did students. These findings are consistent with past research which indicates that teachers are more knowledgeable than students about types of cheating (Evans & Craig, 1990), and that students tend to be more tolerant of cheating than faculty members (Gardner & Melvin, 1988).

In some of the scenarios, there was a significantly higher percentage of faculty members than students who classified scenarios as academic misconduct. One example of this significant difference is *getting questions / answers from someone who wrote the same exam earlier that day*.⁹ Student 'yes' responses were lower by 36.1%. This

⁸ The three scenarios that elicited a higher percentage of 'yes' responses from students were: *studying with friends who are in the same course, paying someone to type an assignment for you, and asking an instructor for help / hints that were not given to anyone else*. The differences in student and faculty member responses were minimal for each of these scenarios (less than 3.0% difference for each question). As well, in each of these scenarios the majority of students and faculty members indicated that these behaviours were not examples of academic misconduct.

⁹ It is clear that some behaviours lose their classification as academic misconduct as a function of time passage. For example, when this scenario was presented as *getting questions / answers from someone who wrote the same exam last year* a much lower proportion of respondents classified it as misconduct. This difference is especially prevalent among faculty members whereby the difference of one year is responsible for a 50.6% decrease their in 'yes' classifications.

difference may be attributed to the fact that students can divide the sense of responsibility amongst three parties (student obtaining answers, student providing answers, and professor for re-using the same examination). As such, the student obtaining the answers may be able to reduce their personal blameworthiness, and justify a diminished sense of responsibility. Written comments provided by faculty members also indicate that professors should share the blame for this scenario. One faculty member commented that,

“...it is really the responsibility of the professor to take preventative measures in order to ensure that this scenario does not occur (ex. using different examinations for different sections of the course, and changing examinations from year to year)”.

Another faculty member indicated that this scenario does not “reflect misconduct on the part of the students, but inappropriate behaviours on the part of faculty, where a student is given an unfair advantage”.

Another scenario which has produced some degree of disagreement is *working on an assignment with other students when the instructor doesn't allow it*. This scenario accounted for 37.0% more faculty members making this classification than students. Many professors seem to encourage working with peers, however this encouragement is dependant upon the degree to which there is collaboration (for example, low proportions of faculty members and students classified *studying with friends who are in the same course* as academic misconduct). Again, the lower proportion of students could be attributed to the fact that this scenario presents a shared responsibility with the other students involved.

Faculty members seem to feel much more strongly about *submitting one of your essays to more than one course without permission* than do students. This scenario was cited as academic misconduct by 36.1% more faculty members than students. These student responses indicate that low proportions of students actually read the *University of Windsor Undergraduate Calendar* because this is one of the few scenarios which is actually discussed in the handbook. Specifically, on page 35 of the handbook it states, “Plagiarism...includes submitting one’s own essay, paper, or thesis on more than one occasion”. This also indicates that many faculty members may be unfamiliar with the calendar because 20.8% of professors indicated ‘no’ or ‘uncertain’ as to whether this scenario constitutes academic misconduct. One of the student comments indicated that this act could be justified on the basis that they wrote the paper and therefore have ownership of the ideas and as such it is not really an act of plagiarism.

Interestingly, there were other plagiarism behaviours that elicited a significantly higher percentage of responses from faculty members. Specifically, 23.5% less students than faculty members indicated that *submitting a friend’s essay with a few changes* was academic misconduct. Again, this may be due to the shared sense of responsibility. One of the student respondents indicated that it would be okay to participate in this behaviour if they cited their friend’s essay in the reference section. The degree to which another person’s work is consulted makes an obvious difference in the classification of behaviours. When a friend’s essay is used only to get ideas and references much lower proportions of faculty members and students cite this as an example of academic misconduct.

The final two significant differences to be discussed also relate to plagiarism behaviours. *Copying a few sentences without footnoting in a bibliography* was classified as misconduct by 26.9% more faculty members than students. Similarly, *'padding' a few items on a bibliography* obtained much higher rankings from faculty members than from students (difference of 17.3%). A student response indicated that these behaviours are "harmless", but the difference may also be accounted for on the basis of awareness. With the prevalence of larger classes, there is less of a chance that students will be taught proper essay writing skills. This problem was discussed in an article that was published in the *Winnipeg Free Press* which indicated that many of the plagiarism cases at the University of Manitoba are being attributed to the fact that students may not have been taught to properly credit researched material (Santin, 1993).

It is also interesting to note the pattern that both faculty members and students provided the highest proportion of 'yes' responses for three scenarios which are considered to be 'examination behaviours'. This is consistent with the research results of Wright and Kelly (1974) who determined that faculty and students agreed most strongly that examination behaviours were considered to be cheating. As such, there is a possibility that some forms of cheating behaviours are routinely being overlooked or disregarded because they do not fall within the category of the more easily recognizable behaviours.

It should also be noted that there was some degree of uncertainty amongst both faculty members and students as to which behaviours are considered to be academic misconduct. In fact, there was some percentage of 'uncertain' responses provided for

every scenario by faculty members or students. This indicates that none of the behaviours are entirely understood by all of the university population. However, faculty members and students were, on average, equally uncertain about the classification of these behaviours (average faculty 'uncertain' response = 11.5%, average student 'uncertain' response = 13.0%).

Summary & Recommendations

The results from this chapter have revealed a number of trends in the classification of academic misconduct. These trends include:

- Faculty members and students at the University of Windsor tend only to agree upon the classifications of the most 'popular' cheating behaviours. Specifically, both groups are likely to classify obvious and illegal behaviours as misconduct, but there is a high degree of variance and uncertainty in the classifications of the remainder of the behaviours.
- Higher proportions of faculty members (than students) tend to regard behaviours as academic misconduct. This implies that faculty members are not effectively communicating their views to their students.
- Students are less likely to classify behaviours as academic misconduct if the behaviour involves more than one student and if they are able to share the blame. As such, there is a diminished sense of personal responsibility / accountability among students.

Theoretically, the inconsistent and uncertain classifications of academic misconduct may prevent the applicability and effectiveness of the deterrence doctrine. If certain behaviours are not recognized as prohibited acts, students are not likely to be deterred and faculty members are not likely to apprehend these behaviours. Therefore, it is necessary for the University administration to get involved and take action.

Specifically, it is recommended that:

- The University administration must take the responsibility of clarifying which behaviours will be operationally defined as academic misconduct, and must ensure that both students and faculty members are educated on this subject matter.
- The University must also assume the role of teaching students a sense of personal responsibility and accountability students for their actions. This should be taught throughout their education – from ‘Head Start’ to Convocation.
- The University should use this information in the development of prevention strategies. In order to develop strategies to prevent academic misconduct, it is important to first determine if faculty members and students share common perceptions and classifications of cheating (Roberts & Toombs, 1993).

Table 4.1:**Classifications of Academic Misconduct
(Faculty and Student Responses)**

			Yes	No	Unsure
1/	Copying from another student's exam	Faculty	99.4	0.0	0.6
		Student	95.9	1.5	2.4
2/	Allowing another student to copy from your exam	Faculty	98.2	0.0	1.8
		Student	86.4	7.1	6.5
3/	Writing an exam for another student	Faculty	98.8	0.6	0.6
		Student	95.0	2.1	2.7
4/	Getting questions or answers from someone who wrote the same exam earlier that day	Faculty	77.4	8.3	12.5
		Student	41.3	36.9	21.8
5/	Getting questions or answers from someone who wrote the same exam last year	Faculty	26.8	54.8	17.3
		Student	15.9	74.0	9.7
6/	Studying from an old exam that was never distributed	Faculty	18.5	56.0	23.8
		Student	5.6	78.5	15.9
7/	Studying with friends who are in the same course	Faculty	1.2	98.8	0.0
		Student	3.5	94.7	1.8
8/	Working on an assignment with other students when the instructor doesn't allow it	Faculty	81.5	5.4	11.9
		Student	44.5	33.9	21.2
9/	Paying someone to write an assignment for you	Faculty	98.2	1.2	0.6
		Student	86.4	8.0	5.3
10/	Paying someone to research an assignment for you	Faculty	73.2	10.7	15.5
		Student	58.7	28.3	13.0
11/	Paying someone to type an assignment for you	Faculty	3.0	94.0	3.0
		Student	4.1	90.9	5.0

12/	Submitting one of your essays to more than one course without permission	Faculty Student	78.6 42.5	7.7 37.5	13.1 20.1
13/	Submitting a friend's essay with a few changes	Faculty Student	97.0 73.5	1.8 14.5	1.2 12.1
14/	Using a friend's old essay to get ideas and references	Faculty Student	10.7 3.8	78.0 84.4	11.3 11.5
15/	Copying a few sentences without footnoting in a paper	Faculty Student	82.1 55.2	8.3 28.0	9.5 16.8
16/	'Padding' a few items on a bibliography	Faculty Student	59.5 42.2	13.7 32.2	26.2 25.4
17/	Pretending to be sick / using a phoney excuse to miss an exam or get an extension	Faculty Student	83.9 67.6	6.0 21.8	9.5 10.6
18/	Asking an instructor for help / hints that were not given to anyone else	Faculty Student	17.9 20.9	56.5 61.1	25.0 17.7
19/	Changing the information on an official university document	Faculty Student	94.6 87.6	1.2 5.9	4.2 6.5
20/	Noticing another student cheating but not reporting it to the instructor	Faculty Student	22.0 12.1	36.3 52.2	41.7 35.1

FIGURE 4.1
SCENARIOS CLASSIFIED AS ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

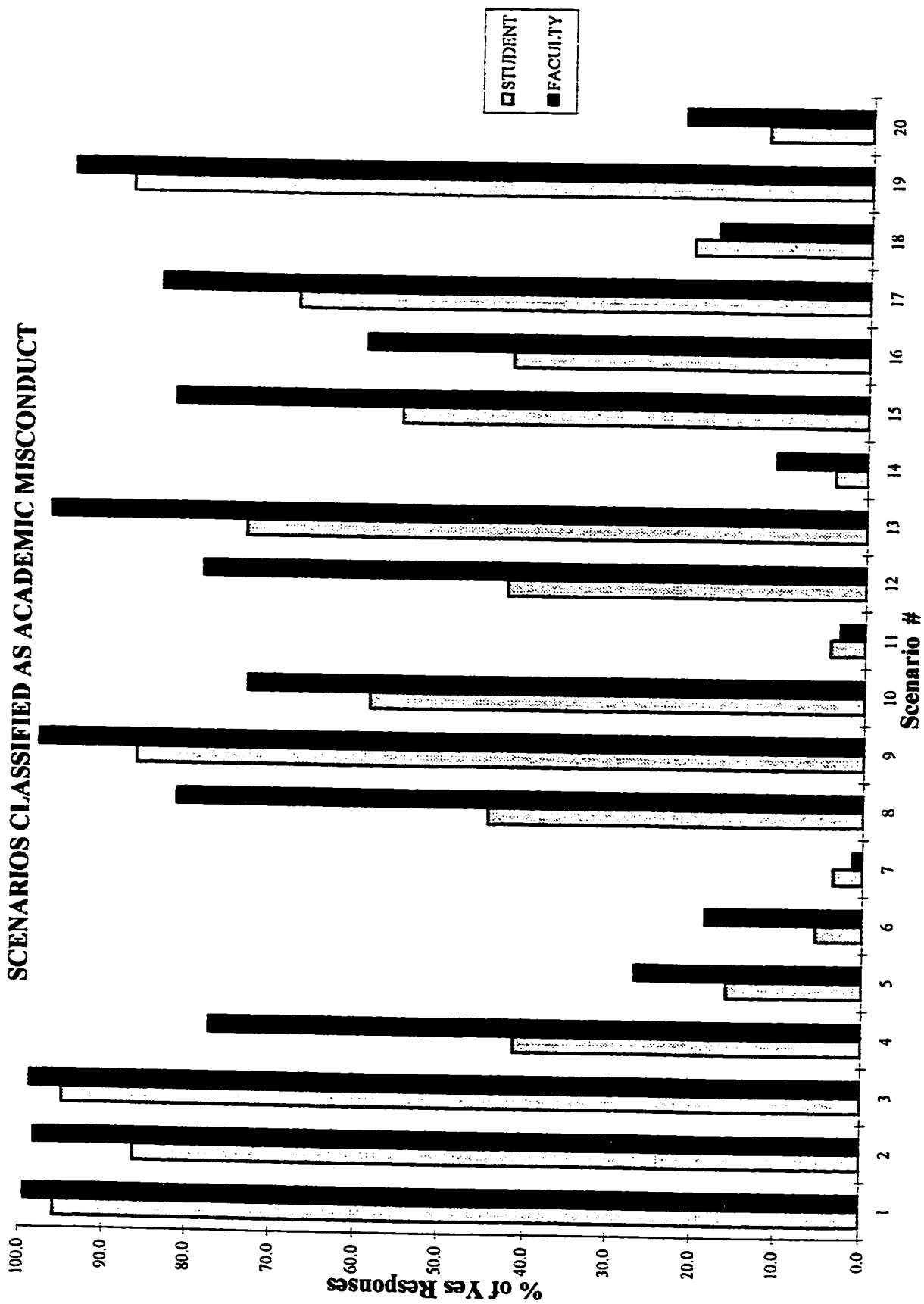


FIGURE 4.2
SCENARIOS NOT CLASSIFIED AS ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

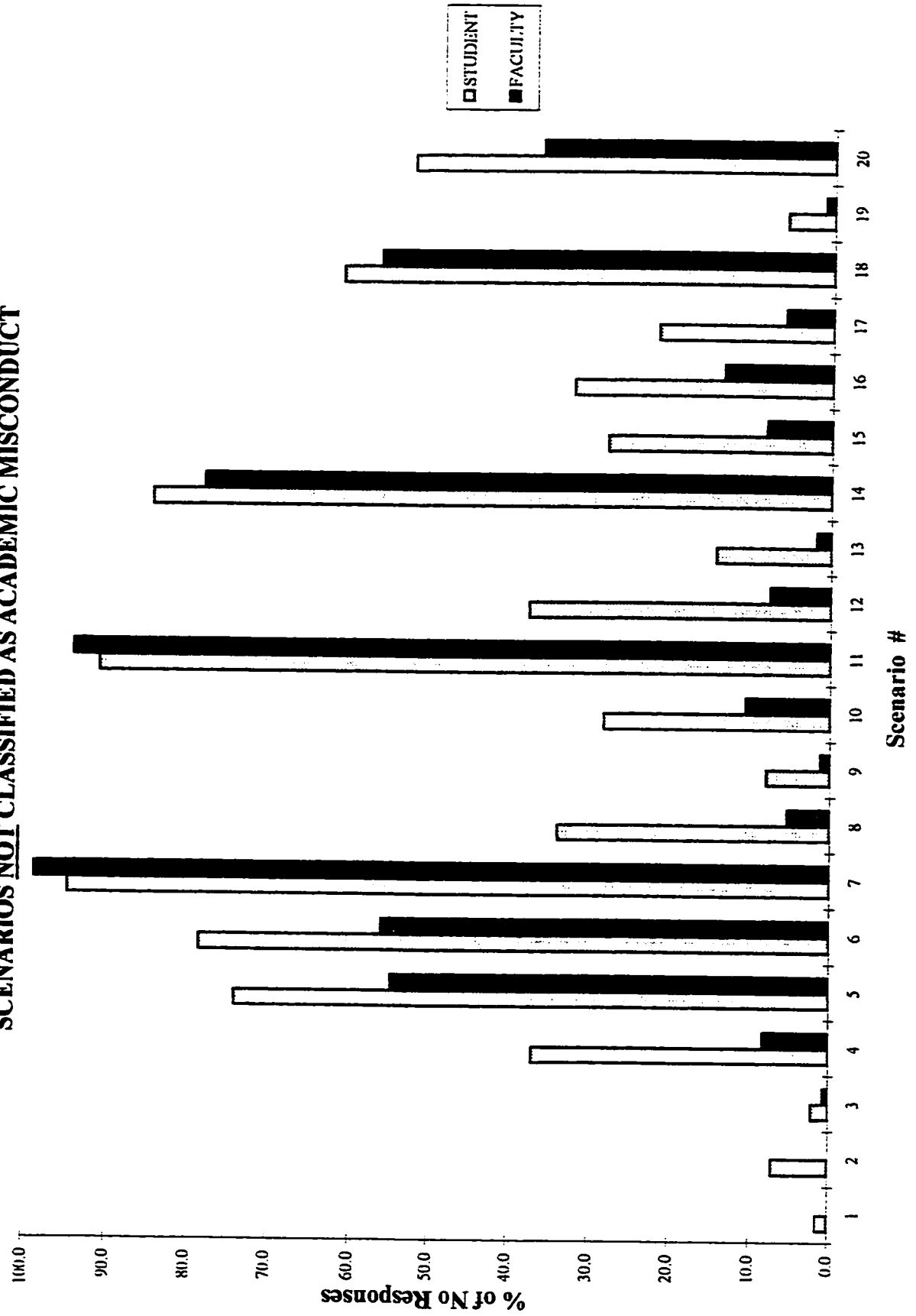
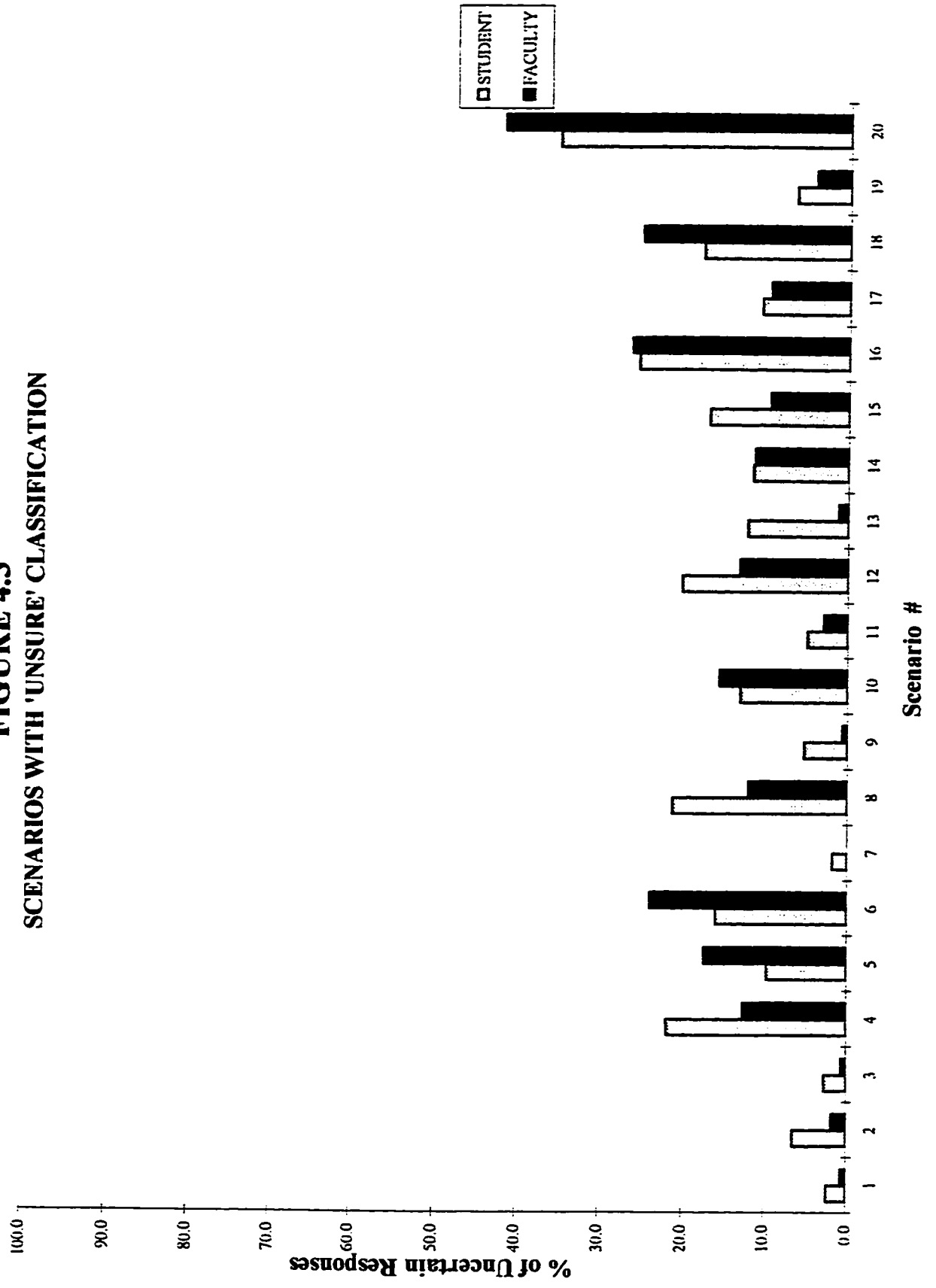


FIGURE 4.3
SCENARIOS WITH 'UNSURE' CLASSIFICATION



Chapter Five

Prevalence of Academic Misconduct

“At some time in his or her career, almost every instructor will be confronted with student academic dishonesty” (Saunders, 1993:224). This quotation indicates that academic misconduct is a behaviour which is common throughout the educational system. However, the lack of common definitions and classifications makes it difficult to determine the frequency in which academic misconduct actually occurs. Various studies, adopting different methodologies, have resulted a wide range of findings. However, all of these studies seem to reach a consensus that occurrences of academic misconduct are frequent, and that instances of this behaviour generally remain undetected.

Michaels and Miethe (1989) used self-report data from 623 undergraduate students at a large American university to determine that as many as 85.7% students had cheated on exams, papers, or homework at some point in their lives. Similarly, using a sample of 6,096 students from thirty-one colleges and universities across the United States, McCabe (1993) found that 67.4% of the students indicated that they had cheated on a test or major assignment at least once while an undergraduate. In addition, Singhal's (1982) survey of 364 Arizona State engineering students indicated that 56% of those students reported cheating, and Bishop (1993) found that 53% of upper class ethics classes at Iowa State University confessed to cheating on a test or plagiarizing a paper while at that university. These high percentages seem to imply that virtually everyone cheats. However, these figures may be misleading because they encompass large time

spans (ex. cheating within entire life or during college career).

In an investigation of occurrences of academic deviance within the given time constraint of one academic year, Haines, et al. (1986) distributed questionnaires to 380 students at a small south-west state university and found that 54% of these students had cheated on major exams, daily / weekly quizzes, or assignments within that year. This figure represents the combined totals of cheating on three specific measures, some of which were 'significant' (ex. major exam) and others 'insignificant' assignments (ex. daily quizzes). In a study of plagiarism at a large state university, assignments which were submitted for an upper level business course class were reviewed. It was determined that 3% of the 1,374 students enrolled in that specific course had cheated on that particular assignment (Karlins et al., 1988). While this figure appears to be relatively low in comparison to other studies, it is important to realize that it is in relation to one particular assignment, in one specific class, and the criteria to be classified as 'cheating' were stringent.

In order to measure attitudes towards students who cheat, Jendrek (1992) administered a questionnaire to a sample of 776 undergraduate students at a medium sized, mid-western American university. The findings revealed that approximately one third of the students agreed with the statement that "academic dishonesty is a problem at this university" (Jendrek, 1992). Furthermore, almost half of these students indicated that they had been asked by another student to assist in answering questions during an examination, and 74% of the students in the study claimed to have observed cheating (Jendrek, 1992). Although students are aware that other students are cheating, and report

feeling disgust (31%) and anger (25%) towards the cheaters (Jendrek, 1992), research results have consistently indicated that very few students would actually report cheaters to their instructors. Singhal (1982) found that 7% of the students who witnessed cheating had reported it, and Jendrek (1992) noted that only 1% of the students informed the instructor.

High rates of academic misconduct can be partially attributed to the minimal risks associated with participating in this type of behaviour. Michaels and Mieth (1989) found that students report frequent opportunities for cheating with little risk of detection. Since only 1.3% of the students who were questioned by Haines et al. (1986) reported being caught, it is apparent that instances of academic misconduct do remain largely undetected. Similarly, while 91% of students surveyed know of someone who has committed academic misconduct, only 18% of these students know of someone who has actually been punished for it (Bishop, 1993).

In 1993, the *Winnipeg Free Press* ran an article about 'Mark' (*Winnipeg Free Press*, 1993). Mark was a University of Windsor political science student who admitted to cheating on exams in order to obtain good grades. He claimed that he had no choice because the competition for marks and jobs is fierce and because his parents expected him to excel in school. The fact that incidents of cheating at the University of Windsor have been reported across the country tarnishes the University's reputation, and suggests that there is reason for serious concern.

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to address this concern by conducting an examination of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor. Theoretically, high

levels of academic misconduct may indicate that students are not being deterred by the current sanctioning policies and procedures which are in effect. Therefore, the pages which follow will provide an assessment of the prevalence of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor.

Method

In Part B of the questionnaire, students and faculty members were asked different sets of questions relating to the existence of academic misconduct. Students were asked questions regarding their personal participation in cheating related behaviours, their knowledge of other students who have cheated, and two hypothetical situations. Faculty members were asked to indicate whether they had suspected or apprehended any students of cheating during the previous semester, and how they dealt with any students that had been caught.

Results

The results relating to the prevalence of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor are discussed in the pages which follow.

Cheating During the Previous Semester

When students were asked if they had cheated in any of their courses during the previous semester, the majority of students (76.9%) indicated that they had not cheated at all. However, 4.2% of these non-cheaters were falsely accused of cheating. And, while

22.1% of the students indicated that had cheated in the previous semester, only 4.1% of these self-reported cheaters indicated that they had been caught.

Cheating While at the University of Windsor

The majority of students (59.3%) maintained that they had not cheated at all since they have been at the University of Windsor. Of these non-cheaters, 3.5% of the students indicated that they had been falsely accused of cheating. However, there was a large proportion of who students (37.8%) admitted to cheating during this time span. Of these students who admitted to cheating, only 4.8% indicated that they had been caught.

Know Other Student(s) Who Cheated in the Previous Semester

Students were also asked if they knew someone who had cheated in the previous semester. The majority of respondents (58.1%) indicated that they were aware of someone who cheated in the previous semester, and only 35.7% of the respondents did not know another student who had cheated. Of the students who knew someone who cheated, only 15.1% of the respondents indicated that this / these student(s) had been caught.

Justifications for Cheating

When students were asked under what circumstances they would cheat on their final exams, approximately half of the students indicated that they would not cheat under any circumstances (50.7%), but the remainder of the students (46.0%) were able to

justify cheating under certain circumstances. Of these justifications, 15.3% of the students indicated that they would cheat if they were at risk of debarment, 14.2% would cheat if they were at risk of failure, 12.4% could justify cheating if they thought that they could get away with it, and 4.1% would cheat if they were not prepared for the examination.

Reporting Another Student

Students were asked to indicate what they would do if they saw a student using 'crib notes' during an examination. More than half of the respondents (52.8%) indicated that they would ignore the incident. While 34.8% expressed uncertainty with this scenario, 5.0% would report it to the professor, 2.7% would confront the cheater, and 0.9% would be encouraged to copy this cheating behaviour for their next examination.

Suspected Cheating in the Previous Semester

The majority of faculty members (56.0%) indicated that they did not suspect any students of cheating during the previous semester. However, there was also a large proportion of faculty members (41.7%) who indicated that 'yes' they had suspected students of cheating.

Apprehended Cheating in the Previous Semester

The majority of faculty members (67.3%) indicated that they had not apprehended any students for cheating. However, a total of 30.3% of faculty members

did apprehend a cheater, but the manner in which these respondents dealt with the apprehension varied significantly. Of the faculty members who had apprehended students cheating, 47.2% dealt with the incident informally, 31.4% reported the incident to the Dean, 21.5% reported the incident to the head of their department, and none of the faculty members brought the student before the Judicial Panel.

Discussion

According to the questionnaire responses, academic misconduct is a major problem at the University of Windsor with more than one-fifth of the students engaging in some type of cheating behaviour during the time constraint of one semester, and more than one-third of students admitting to cheating since they have been at the university. This is consistent with previous research findings which have indicated that high levels of academic misconduct exist within the university system.

This finding should be of particular concern when it is combined with the Chapter Five finding that lower proportions of students (as compared to faculty members) tend to classify behaviours as academic misconduct. This suggests that students would only indicate a behaviour as cheating if it fell within their own personal interpretation of what constitutes academic misconduct. As such, the prevalence of academic misconduct actually may be higher if the classifications made by faculty members were used as the defining criteria of academic misconduct.

While Jendrek (1992) reported that 84.2 % of students indicated that academic dishonesty is not justified under any circumstances, the responses from this survey

indicate that roughly half of the students at the University of Windsor were able to justify cheating on their final exams under some circumstances. These responses should be taken quite seriously because this is an indicator that half of the student population are considered to be high risk cheaters. These results are consistent with the results from a recent poll administered by *Maclean's* / CTV which asked Canadians what they would do when confronted with a series of ethical dilemmas. The poll asked, *If you were a student and obtained a copy of an important exam before it was given, what would you do?* Over 50% of the sample indicated that they would look at the exam (look at it briefly = 32%, go over it in detail = 21%) (Steele, 1995:14). The high percentage of 'cheaters' in the *Maclean's* survey were believed to be influenced by tough economic times; a decline in respect for governments, religious organizations and other institutions; diminished emphasis on values in the education system; and a vanishing sense of community (Steele, 1995).

The results indicate that there is a consistently low apprehension of cheaters. Very few of the cheaters indicated that they had been caught or knew of someone else who had been caught. With regard to noticing another student cheating, the fact that less than 10% of students would confront the student, or report it to the professor may indicate that students are not overly concerned with the cheating behaviours of their peers. However, according to Jendrek (1992),

"Examining students' reactions to observing someone else cheating is an important area of inquiry because these reactions may serve as indicators of students' progress toward the development of integrity" (p. 260).

The responses from the students at the University of Windsor indicate that there may be a

need to enhance the development of integrity. As well, the reluctance to report other students could be interpreted as an acceptance of cheating behaviours. This is a matter of concern because previous research indicates that the highest predictor of academic misconduct is when students perceive that cheating is socially acceptable at their school (McCabe, 1993).

The aforementioned article in the *Winnipeg Free Press* indicated that students may be encouraged to cheat if they observe other students cheating. Specifically, a University of Windsor student stated, “You watch people cheat and you ask yourself, ‘Why am I doing this honestly?’” (*Winnipeg Free Press*, 1993: A2). However, the results from the present study do not support this article. In fact, an extremely low percentage of students indicated that they would be encouraged to cheat under those circumstances.

The fact that the majority of faculty members did not suspect any students of cheating, while approximately 1/5 of the students engaged in some type of cheating behaviour suggests that faculty members may be naive, and overly trustworthy of their students. It is also consistent with the results from a past study conducted by Singhal (1982) which indicated that there is not enough attention being paid to the incidence of cheating.

Another possible explanation for the low suspicions of cheating is the fact that faculty members may be encouraged to overlook these incidents. According to Livosky and Tauber (1994), there is increased pressure for faculty members to be evaluated more favourably by students because these evaluations are used as a determinant of promotion and tenure. As such, dealing with an incident of cheating could adversely affect a faculty

member's career.

Approximately one-third of faculty members indicated that they had apprehended a student for cheating last semester. However very few of the student respondents indicated that they had been caught. Perhaps this inconsistency can be explained by the fact that roughly half of the professors who apprehended a student decided to deal with the incident informally. Therefore, a professor may have informally asked a student to change seats during an examination or to re-write an essay and the student may not have interpreted these reaction as being 'caught'. In addition, even if the incident was reported to the Dean or the head of a department it does not necessarily mean that the student was actually 'caught' or that any action was taken against the student. A couple of faculty members shared their methods of prevention which included, "I give only essay exams, which makes cheating very difficult" and that cheating is "no problem in medium / small class with close supervision".

Summary & Recommendations

The results from this chapter have provided insight with regard to the prevalence of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor. Specifically, the results have indicated that:

- A high proportion of students engage in academic misconduct at the University of Windsor, but very few of these cheaters are caught. Cheating is a serious matter because it devalues a degree, undermines the reputation of an institution, and it creates an unfairness in today's competitive world between students.
- Students are able to justify cheating under various circumstances.

- Students are unlikely to report another student who has cheated.
- While faculty members are quite likely to suspect incidents of academic misconduct, they are less likely to follow through with an apprehension of these cheaters.
- Only one-half of the faculty members are willing to follow the formal procedures as prescribed by *Bylaw 31*. Instead, faculty members prefer to deal with cheating on an informal basis.

Theoretically, these results suggest that the current policies and practices do not have a deterrent effect in the prevention of cheating behaviours. As well, there is an implication that both faculty members and students are unconcerned, unwilling to get involved, or uncertain of the correct procedures. Based upon the results of this chapter, the recommendations include,

- The University administration should conduct a thorough examination of the current policies.
- In order to control the University's problem with academic misconduct, revisions must be made to these policies.
- All members of the University community must take this matter seriously and act diligently. There is a need for greater action, and a change of attitude among the University administration, faculty members and students.
- Faculty members must take academic integrity seriously. Therefore, it may be necessary to make 'adherence to the policies' as a condition of their employment.
- The University must assume the role of assessing student values and promoting ethical standards and integrity.
- In order to ensure a greater adherence to the policies, there is a need to educate students and faculty members of these policies.

Chapter Six

Policy

Policies relating to academic misconduct are important because these policies are used to articulate a university's position on academic misconduct and because they establish what is to be considered acceptable conduct for the student body (Weaver, et al., 1991). Since students and faculty members are less likely to adhere to policies that they either do not know about or do not understand (McCabe & Trevino, 1993), there is a need for comprehensive policies that are readily available to all members of the university community.

Theoretically, in order for students to be deterred from participating in a certain behaviour, there would have to be an awareness and understanding of the policies which govern that specific type of behaviour. As such, this chapter seeks to measure the awareness, accessibility and thoroughness of the University of Windsor's policy on academic misconduct.

Method - Questionnaire Data

The data from Part B of the student and faculty member questionnaires has been used to indicate student and faculty member awareness of the policies, as well as the source of their awareness, and their views of it's effectiveness. Students and faculty members were asked about penalties, and faculty members were also asked specifically about the policy in general.

Results - Questionnaire Data

The results of student and faculty awareness of policies will be discussed in the pages which follow.

Awareness of Penalties

The majority of students (74.6%) indicated that they are aware of the penalties for cheating. However, there were 22.1% of the students who admitted that they were not aware of the penalties.

Similarly, when faculty members were asked about their awareness of the penalties for cheating, 75.6% of these respondents indicated that they were aware of the penalties, and 22.6% indicated that they were not aware of the penalties.

Source of Information

The majority of the students who were aware of the penalties indicated that they found out about the penalties from the student handbook (46.1%). Other students indicated that they had obtained this information from professors (39.6%) and from other students (14.3%). However, none of the students indicated that they became aware of the penalties after they had been caught for cheating.

Effectiveness of Policy

The majority of faculty members (72.1%) implied that they have an awareness of the policies on academic misconduct members by providing an assessment of the

effectiveness of the policies. In fact, when asked about its effectiveness, only 17.9% of faculty members declined to evaluate the effectiveness because they were not aware of the policy. With regard to the effectiveness of the policy, of the faculty members who were aware of the policy, 62.3% indicated that they do not believe that the policy is effective, an 37.2% of faculty members believe that the policy is effective.

Source of Information

Faculty members were asked how they found out about policies on academic misconduct. The majority of faculty members who were aware of the policies indicated that they found about the policies by reading the bylaws (45.8%). Other faculty members indicated that they had obtained this information from other professors (22.9%), by reading the handbook (17.6%), and after a student was caught (13.7%).

Statements of Academic Honesty

When faculty members were asked, “*Do you include statements of academic honesty on your course outline?*”, over half of all instructors (56.5%) indicated that they did not include statements of academic honesty, while 40.5% indicated that they do include these statements.

Discussion - Questionnaire Data

Approximately three-quarters of both faculty members and students have indicated that they are aware of the penalties for cheating. This suggests that there is a

high level of awareness of academic misconduct related issues at the University of Windsor. However, this high level of awareness is misleading for a number of reasons. Specifically, it would be difficult for faculty members and students to be aware of the penalties because most administrative tribunals (including the University of Windsor Judicial Panel) are not bound by precedent. As such, there are no specific penalties or sanctions that are consistently imposed for cases of academic misconduct. Instead, the Panel may consider the facts of the case as well as any additional circumstances (e.g. financial, personal, health) that may pertain to the offence. This allows the Panel to use their discretion in order to impose sanctions that meet the specifics of each situation. Furthermore, since the results of Panel hearings are not reported to the general population of the University, it would be difficult for faculty members or students to be aware of the actual sanctions. As such, the respondents for this question could only be aware of the general categories of penalties, and not the specific penalties that the Panel has utilized.

The high proportion of students who are aware of the penalties may be misleading because many faculty members tend to be deal with academic misconduct on an 'informal' level. These informal sanctions may inaccurately pass a message on to students that this is the policy of the University, and that this is the type of penalty that is applied throughout the University.

As well, the sources of awareness also indicate that the perceived awareness may be misleading. Specifically, while high proportions of the respondents claim to be aware of the penalties, a majority of the students have indicated that they found out about the

penalties by consulting with the handbook. Yet, an examination of the student handbook reveals that there is not a detailed nor complete discussion of academic misconduct. In fact, the handbook makes only a brief reference to plagiarism behaviours. Furthermore, the handbook does not outline any type of penalty for committing an academic offence. Therefore, if the handbook was used as the only source of knowledge, these students would be entirely unaware of the penalties. As such, the handbook, in its current form, cannot be considered as a 'true' source of knowledge for penalties.

Furthermore the student responses may also be misleading due to the fact that a large proportion of students have indicated that they found about the penalties from a professor. However, given the fact that at least one-third¹⁰ of the professors do not have an awareness of the penalties, it is unlikely that these professors would be passing along accurate information. Students have also indicated that they rely upon other students as a source of knowledge. However, given the fact that these other students may have relied upon the handbook, or professors, it is possible that students may be passing along inaccurate information.

The most accurate source of information would presumably be to consult directly with *Bylaw 31* for policies pertaining to academic misconduct. However, only ½ of the faculty members have indicated the bylaws as their source. Even those who read the bylaws may not be clear on the policy because the bylaws are quite vague as a source of information. Specifically, Article 1 of *Bylaw 31* provides examples of misconduct for

¹⁰ This figure is based upon 20.2% of the faculty members who have indicated that they are not aware of the policy, and 13.7% of the faculty members who have indicated that the source of their knowledge was the handbook.

which students are subject to university discipline. However, the only defining examples of academic misconduct are listed as “dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, impersonation at an examination, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University.”(p. 3). While this list was not intended to be all inclusive, it should be expanded to include some of the ‘non-traditional’ forms of cheating behaviour.

The effectiveness of the policy seems to be a matter of concern for faculty members. This is indicated by the fact that 2/3 of the faculty members who were aware of the policy on academic misconduct indicated that it is not effective, and by the fact that a large proportion of faculty members added written comments to their answers for this question. Some faculty members described the problems that they have had with reporting incidents of academic misconduct. The written comments included the following:

“I have tried to have a case sent before the Judicial Panel – I sent it last April (1994) I can’t even find out from Student Affairs if anything was ever done! Local leadership gives the impression that dealing with cheating takes too much effort. A local survey of students said 35% felt cheating was a severe problem in our faculty.”

“The University won’t even help by providing alternate colour M.C. exam sheets or readily available colour paper for alternate form finals to discourage copying. I tried once, the Dean of students did not return my calls so I was forced to handle the situation myself.”

“I turned a student into the dean for forging a doctors note, and also I got notes from the doctor and his secretary attesting to the fact that the note was forged. Nothing has been done! I guess this act on my part was a violation of the university’s policy on OMERTA¹¹.”

“I have heard of cases where the University refuses to take any action.”

¹¹ This term refers to a vow of silence, and is generally associated with the Mafia.

“The policy is not implemented with any vigour. Even in the most blatant cases of misconduct students get every break imaginable. It is up to individual faculty members to develop and implement policies and procedures to limit cheating.”

Interestingly, all of the written comments referred to a negative experience and dissatisfaction with the policies relating to academic misconduct. These comments suggest the University is generally not willing to get involved in these types of matters. They also suggest that some faculty members would like to be more informed / involved in the process.

Since the undergraduate handbook does not provide a thorough explanation of academic misconduct, it would seem that another logical place to convey this information would be on course outlines. However, less than half of all faculty members include statements of academic honesty on their outlines. This is similar to past research which indicates that 53% of faculty members rarely or never discuss university policies on academic dishonesty (Nuss, 1984). However, some of the written comments indicated that the faculty members discuss academic dishonesty in their classes.

Method - Content Analysis

In order to conduct a policy assessment, the policies in effect at the University of Windsor will be compared with the policies in effect at four other universities within Ontario¹². This assessment includes a comparison of the information which is provided in the undergraduate handbooks. This information will be assessed by utilizing a set of

¹² The universities are: University of Windsor, University of Guelph, University of Waterloo, and Carleton University.

criteria established by Weaver et al. in their 1991 study. The content and components of the policies will be examined for the inclusion of the following criteria:

- 1/ Definition of Academic Integrity / Statements of Expectations for Academic Conduct
- 2/ Responsibility for Academic Dishonesty
- 3/ Definition(s) of Dishonest Acts
- 4/ Procedures for Handling Suspected Academic Misconduct
- 5/ Punishment
- 6/ Appeals Process¹³

A description of the policies that are stated in each university's undergraduate handbook are outlined in that pages which follow, and these results are summarized in Table 6.1.

Results - Content Analysis

The results from the content analysis phase of this chapter will be discussed in the pages which follow.

The University of Windsor

On page 35 of the undergraduate calendar four paragraphs are devoted to a discussion of the university's "Policy on Plagiarism". Plagiarism is the only form of academic misconduct which is discussed at any point in the undergraduate calendar. The discussion of plagiarism basically offers a definition of the behaviours that constitute this offence but makes no mention of academic integrity, responsibility, procedures, punishments, nor appeals. The only reference to penalties is that it "is considered to be a

¹³ These components are based on the study conducted by Weaver et al. (1991). Two of the components (an honour code and an honour committee) were omitted for this particular analysis due to their perceived lack of relevance and applicability to Canadian universities.

serious offence". As such, the University of Windsor meets only one of the six criteria suggested by Weaver et. al. (1991).

The University of Guelph

Pages 62-66 in the University of Guelph's undergraduate calendar describe the policies as related to academic misconduct. This information is divided into three sections. Under the heading of 'offences', there are detailed descriptions of several examples of academic misconduct. The 'penalties' section provides four categories of penalties ranging from submission of a new piece of work, to expulsion from the university for a period of five years. And, the 'procedures' section deals with detection, documentation, and response to academic misconduct. As such, the undergraduate calendar at the University of Guelph provides a very detailed account of academic misconduct and it makes reference to each of the six components listed by Weaver et al. (1991).

The University of Waterloo

On page 1:10 of the University of Waterloo's undergraduate calendar, half of a page is devoted to the discussion of 'Student Academic Discipline (Policy # 71)'. Within this discussion there is a list of 9 behaviours that are considered to be academic offences, and there is a list of 7 disciplinary penalties that may be imposed. As well, it indicates how to obtain a full text of the policy, and it provides the phone number for the Ombudsperson who can "advise students of their rights under this Policy and to advise on

the procedures to be followed” (p. 1:10). As such, the undergraduate handbook from the University of Waterloo meets two of the criteria outlined by Weaver et. al. (1991).

Carleton University

The undergraduate handbook from Carleton University devotes one-half of a page to a description of ‘Instructional Offences’. Within this section it outlines definitions for instructional offences, an outline of sanctions, and the procedure for reporting an offence. However, it did not mention appeal, academic integrity or responsibility. As such, this handbook meets three of the six criteria outlined by Weaver et. al. (1991).

Discussion - Content Analysis

The undergraduate calendar is a logical place for important information to appear because this book is distributed to all students on an annual basis, and because it is available and accessible for reference throughout the year. However, only one of the universities utilized their undergraduate calendar to provide a thorough and complete discussion of the policies. Of the universities that were analyzed, the undergraduate handbook from the University of Guelph is the only handbook which refers to all six of the criteria that were suggested by Weaver et. al. (1991). These results are consistent with previous research which indicates that policies tend to include some combination of criteria, yet very few policies contain a detailed description of all of the criteria (Weaver et. al., 1991).

The information provided in the University of Windsor’s handbook is the least

descriptive of all of the universities, and it meets the least number of the criteria. This implies that academic misconduct is not a matter of concern at the University of Windsor. As well, by making reference to only plagiarism, the undergraduate handbook seems to imply that plagiarism is the only prohibited behaviour at the University. Theoretically, if students and faculty members are misinformed, or unaware of the policies, it is unlikely that they will abide by the terms of these policies, and there is a low likelihood of deterrence.

Summary & Recommendations

The results from this chapter revealed several trends with regard to the policies governing incidents of academic misconduct. These trends include:

- The majority of respondents believe that they are aware of the penalties for cheating, and the policies governing incidents of academic misconduct.
- Students and faculty members seem to have a false / inaccurate sense of awareness with regard to the penalties for cheating and the policies relating to academic misconduct.
- Students rely upon their undergraduate calendar / handbook as a source of information for University policies.
- The handbook does not provide an adequate description of penalties or policies.
- A high proportion of faculty members believe that the current policies relating to academic misconduct are not effective.
- Faculty members have indicated a desire to be more involved in the process for dealing with academic misconduct.

Theoretically, if the members of the university community are not aware of the rules and penalties governing behaviour, it is unlikely that these rules will have any type

of deterrent value. Furthermore, an inaccurate awareness of the policies / penalties also suggests an ineffective deterrent. As well, if a policy is viewed as ineffective, it is unlikely that faculty members will implement the policy, and therefore, there is little to deter students from participating in acts of academic misconduct. As such, the following recommendations are suggested,

- Faculty members and students must be re-educated on the subjects of academic integrity and misconduct.
- Detailed information regarding academic misconduct must appear in the undergraduate calendars. Specifically, the undergraduate calendar should reproduce all of the information which is outlined in *Bylaw 31*.
- A description of academic honesty should appear on all course outlines in order to ensure that students have several sources of accurate information.
- Faculty members should be more involved in the process for dealing with instances of academic misconduct.
- Faculty members should be consulted for their input with regard to revising the policies.

Table 6.1:

Discussion of Policies in Undergraduate Handbook

	Windsor	Guelph	Waterloo	Carleton
Academic Integrity		✓		
Responsibility		✓		
Dishonest Acts	✓	✓	✓	✓
Procedures		✓		✓
Punishment		✓	✓	✓
Appeal		✓		

Chapter Seven

Procedure

It has been reported that few faculty members really understand the actual process for reporting instances of academic dishonesty (Jendrek, 1989). This implies that if faculty members do not understand the process, it is unlikely that they would follow the proper procedure for reporting incidents of academic misconduct. As such, this chapter seeks to assess Windsor's procedures by providing a comparison with the procedures that are followed at other universities within Ontario.

Results

The University of Windsor

Bylaw 31 deals with 'Student Affairs' and outlines the University's policy with respect to judicial proceedings. The procedures for dealing with an act of academic misconduct are outlined Article III of *Bylaw 31*. The general procedure is for faculty members to report the incident to the Faculty Dean, who then reports it to the Dean of Student Affairs. The Dean of Student Affairs will conduct a preliminary investigation, and either informally dispose of the complaint, or lay formal charges. Before or after a formal complaint is laid, the Dean of Student Affairs can have a tripartite meeting with the student and the complainant in attempt to work towards a solution. However, only solutions less severe than expulsion and suspension can be worked out. If they are unable to agree on a solution, or if it may involve expulsion or suspension, the student is given notice of a hearing before the Judicial Panel. The Dean of Student Affairs may

also suspend the student until the matter goes before the Judicial Panel.

The University of Guelph

The University of Guelph's full policy on academic misconduct is an exact copy of the information provided in the undergraduate handbook. Within this policy, the procedure that the university follows in dealing with academic misconduct is outlined. Specifically, if a student is suspected of academic misconduct, the instructor in charge of the course should consult with the Chair / Director to determine if a formal complaint is appropriate. Then, the Chair / Director shall make the complaint in writing to the Dean of the college offering the course and the Dean shall then decide whether there should have been a formal complaint. If there is enough evidence for a formal complaint, the Dean will then impose a penalty, if not the matter will be disposed of. There is the option to interview the student at several stages in this process, and the policy indicates that the Vice President Academic should be consulted in order to: decide whether to process the formal complaint, deem the student guilty or not, and to determine the penalty. If the student wishes to appeal the decision or the sanction, the student can request a hearing of the Senate Committee on Student Petitions.

The University of Waterloo

The academic discipline policy from the University of Waterloo indicates that if a student is suspected of academic misconduct, the procedure is to report the offence to the appropriate Associate Dean of the Faculty sponsoring the academic activity. The

Associate Dean then decides whether to proceed formally or informally. If the Associate Dean decides to proceed informally, all parties are required to meet in order to try to agree on the terms of a resolution. If the Associate Dean proceeds formally, the Dean shall meet with the student to hear their response, and then conduct a thorough investigation of the allegations and the response. The Associate Dean shall then convene a meeting to present the findings and the decision. Students may submit a 'Request for a Discipline Hearing' form in order to appeal a formal decision. This brings the matter before a tribunal. It is also within the University of Waterloo's procedure to keep a record of all of the offences. Specifically,

“In order to inform the University community, a summary of each academic discipline case, including the charge, the decision and deviations from normal procedure if any, shall be filed in the University Secretariat, and shall be available, with the student names removed, to the members of the University community.” (p.3).

Carleton University

At Carleton University, the Academic Administrative Handbook outlines the procedures for handling instructional offences. This handbook states that the procedures have two distinct phases. The first phase is the Dean's Interview which is designed to be educational in that should the student acknowledge his/her mistake, the Dean and the student would try to find a mutually acceptable and useful way of correcting the mistake. If the matter is so serious or if the student does not admit to his/her mistake, or if the student is not prepared to accept the Dean's proposal to correct the mistake and the Dean has determined that there is sufficient evidence to proceed, the Dean then has grounds to

recommend that the matter be considered by a tribunal.

Discussion - Content Analysis

At the University of Windsor, faculty members have the option of dealing with the situation on their own, or by following the procedures set out in *Bylaw 31*. If they elect to handle the matter on an informal basis, the procedure are not prescribed by bylaw. This suggests the possibility for high variability among the informal resolutions and procedures that are utilized by each professor. This has been recognized as a potential problem, and in order to overcome this problem, a recent article in the *Winnipeg Free Press* suggests that there should be greater uniformity in disciplining cases of academic dishonesty, and that the people who apply penalties need to be informed of other resolutions (Santin, 1995).

In accordance with the procedures outlined in *Bylaw 31*, each Faculty Dean at the University of Windsor is responsible for passing complaints along to the Dean of Student Affairs who responsible for conducting a preliminary investigation. By contrast, the University of Guelph, the University of Waterloo, and Carleton University all utilize a decentralized process whereby a representative from each faculty is responsible for such an investigation.

At the University of Windsor, *Bylaw 31* indicates that the Dean of Student Affairs may conduct a tripartite meeting with the student and the complainant in order to work towards a solution. However, the bylaws leave it to the discretion of the Dean to determine when such a meeting should occur, if it should occur at all. This tripartite

process can only be used if the penalty will not involve suspension or expulsion. Presumably, this is an indication that a tripartite meeting will only be used in the less serious cases.

The tripartite meeting has some implications of a mediation session. Specifically, bringing the offender and the complainant together to work towards a solution is a common practice in mediation. While, the Dean of Student Affairs may assume the role of mediator in these situations, this is not an effective manner in which to conduct such a meeting. Mediation requires the presence of a *neutral third party* in order to mediate the dispute. It would be difficult for the Dean of Student Affairs to be seen as a neutral third party because his role is to conduct an investigation and if it is not resolved to bring the matter before the Judicial Panel. Therefore, the Dean of Student Affairs has a personal interest in the matter, and cannot equally represent the needs of both parties.

While each of the universities utilize both formal and informal mechanisms for dealing with incidents of academic misconduct, the levels of formality vary at each academic institution and the informal resolutions take place at different stages. At the University of Windsor, the informal procedure would be to deal with the incident at any point before it reaches the formal level of being brought before the Judicial Panel. At the University of Guelph, the informal procedure would involve resolution of the matter before it reaches the formal level of being referred to the Dean of the College. At the University of Waterloo, the Associate Dean of the faculty has the discretion to decide whether to proceed formally or informally. An informal resolution would involve

bringing the parties together to try to work out the matter, and a formal resolution would be a decision handed down by the Associate Dean of that faculty. At Carleton University 'the Dean Interview' is considered to be the informal manner of dispute resolution, and a hearing is the formal procedure.

Interestingly, at the University of Guelph and at the University of Waterloo, a hearing is only used as the manner to deal with an appeal, and is not otherwise used in the sanctioning process. By contrast, the University of Windsor relies upon the use of a hearing to decide serious matters, and matters that cannot be resolved informally. While Carleton University also uses hearings to impose a formal sanction, but hearings are rarely conducted at Carleton University.

The University of Windsor and Carleton University authorize the members of the Judicial Panel to impose the formal sanctions, whereas, at the University of Guelph and the University of Waterloo, authorize the Dean and the Associate Dean of each faculty / college to impose formal sanctions. At Guelph and Waterloo, there is a greater reliance upon a decentralized, in-faculty mechanism for dispute resolution. Theoretically, an in-faculty mechanism for dispute resolution should act as a more effective deterrent because students are more likely to be aware of the results and the effects of any academic sanctions, and because faculty members may feel more involved in the process.

The University of Windsor generally does not keep a record of the cases of academic misconduct, unless they are resolved by the Judicial Panel. While the sanctions and solutions may be indicated within the student's file, there is not a summary of all of these resolutions. By contrast, the University of Waterloo indicates that all

cases of academic misconduct must be reported and filed, and this information is available to all members of the university community.

Summary & Recommendations

This chapter reviewed the University of Windsor's procedures for dealing with academic misconduct. The findings from this chapter can be summarized as follows,

- The University of Windsor uses a procedure for dealing with academic misconduct which is substantially different from the procedures utilized by other universities.
- The University of Windsor uses a centralized system for dealing with all allegations of academic misconduct. The other universities tend to use a decentralized system which provides for greater in-faculty authority.
- Records of academic misconduct are not kept at the University of Windsor, unless the matter is brought before the Judicial Panel.
- The Faculty of Law is the only faculty which operates under their own authority for dealing with academic misconduct.

Although more research in this area is advised, the following recommendations are based upon these preliminary findings,

- The University of Windsor should adopt a decentralized system for dealing with academic misconduct. All faculties should handle their own incidents. This would minimize the sentiment among faculty members that the University does not want to get involved, and that the University does not inform faculty members of results. As well, it may allow for a more accurate and thorough system of recording incidents.
- Detailed records must be kept of all incidents of academic misconduct. Each faculty should be responsible for maintaining documentation of the results from each stage of this process. These results should be summarized and reported to the Dean of Student Affairs on a semesterly basis. As well, it is recommended that any sanctions which have been imposed by the Dean or by the Judicial Panel should be posted in each department of the respective faculty.
- It is also recommended that mediation be incorporated into the procedures for dispute

resolution at the University of Windsor. Mediation should be used as an initial attempt to resolve the issues. If a settlement is not reached, the incident could be referred to the Faculty Dean who would have the authority to investigate the matter, interview the student, and impose a sanction. Such a process offers greater accountability on the part of the offender, and greater involvement of faculty members.

- If mediation were to be used, the value of a neutral third party mediator must be recognized.
- The Judicial Panel should only be used to deal with student appeals.
- Any changes to the current procedures for dealing with academic misconduct must ensure fairness, the opportunity to be heard, and the right to legal representation.

Chapter Eight

Practice

Previous research indicates that students tend to believe that the likelihood of getting caught for cheating is low, and that if they are caught the penalties will not be serious (McCabe, 1993). As well, a 1982 study conducted by Singhal found that most divisions within colleges are not paying enough attention to cheating, and when cheating is detected, colleges do not adequately deal with the problem. According to Jendrek's (1989) survey of 337 faculty members at a public mid-western university, many instructors opt to deal with incidents of academic misconduct on an informal level, which is generally not considered to be an appropriate way of sanctioning these offences. Overall, these informal and lenient penalties may be seen as reinforcers of academic dishonesty, because even when cheating is detected, swift and appropriate punishment may not follow (Davis et al., 1992). As best explained by Jendrek (1989),

“On the one hand, if faculty members are permissive and do little to punish the offender, students may continue to engage in academic dishonesty without fear of punitive action. On the other hand, if students know that faculty members follow a mandated procedure that requires the punishment of academically dishonest behaviour, they may be less likely to engage in such behaviours.” (p.401).

In accordance with Article 1 of *Bylaw 31*,

“University discipline is limited to student misconduct which adversely affects the University community's pursuit of its educational objectives. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the objectives and purposes of the University of Windsor. Any student at the University of Windsor whose conduct is improper in that it exhibits a lack of integrity touching upon the educational objectives and requirements of the University must be disciplined appropriately in the interest of safeguarding and upholding these standards.” (p.3).

Therefore, it is useful to analyze the reactions and practices of the members of the University community people who have been, or have to potential to be involved with issues relating to academic misconduct. Theoretically, behaviours may be deterred dependant upon the perceived probability and severity of the sanction for that particular conduct. As such, the purpose of this chapter is to conduct an examination of the actual and the anticipated sanctioning practices at the University of Windsor in order to determine the potential for the application of the deterrence doctrine.

Method - Questionnaire Data

The data for this analysis was obtained from the responses to several of the questions in Part B of the student and the faculty questionnaires. Both students and faculty members were asked situational questions pertaining to issues relating to the sanctioning of incidents of academic misconduct. The questions on the student questionnaire dealt with anticipated punishments for cheating behaviours, and the questions on the faculty member questionnaire dealt with anticipated reactions to two types of cheating.

Results - Questionnaire Data

The responses to the questions pertaining to sanctioning practices will be presented in the pages which follow, and summarized in Figure 8.1 and Figure 8.2.

Anticipated Sanctions for Copying on an Exam

When students were asked, *What do you think would happen if one of your professors saw you copying from another student's exam?*, 92.0% of the students indicated that they thought that they would be punished in some way. The punishment that was cited most frequently was a failing grade on the assignment and/or in the course (47.2%). Twenty-three per cent indicated that they thought that they would be suspended or expelled from the university, and 21.8% of the students thought that they would receive a warning. Of the students who didn't think that they would be punished, 74.5% thought that it was because the professor would have no proof, and 25.5% thought that it was because the professors don't really care.

Faculty members were also asked a situational question related to copying on an exam. Specifically, they were asked *Would you lay formal charges (ex. bring a student before the Judicial Panel) if you could prove that a student had copied from another student's exam?*. The majority of respondents (63.1%) indicated that they would definitely be willing to lay formal charges. While 24.4% of faculty members indicated that they would rather deal with it on their own, 8.4% of this sample expressed a reluctance to get involved in the matter by responding that nothing would be done (4.2%), that it would take too much time (1.8%), or that they feared legal ramifications (2.4%).

Anticipated Sanctions for Plagiarism

When students were asked, *What do you think would happen if your professor thought that you had copied a few sentences without footnoting in a paper or 'padded'*

few items on a bibliography?, 82.6% of the students believed that they would be punished in some way. With this scenario, the highest proportion of students (44.2%) indicated that they thought that they would receive a warning as punishment. Lesser proportions of students anticipated harsher punishments, with 6.2% of students indicating that they anticipated suspension or expulsion, and with 32.2% indicating a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Of the 14.5% of the students who didn't anticipate a punishment, 56.8% believed that the lack of a punishment would be due to the fact that there would be due to the absence of proof, and 42.8% anticipated that most professors wouldn't really care.

When faculty members were asked, *Would you lay formal charges (ex. bring a student before the Judicial Panel) if two students submitted assignments that were very much alike?* 23.8% indicated that they would, whereas 61.3% indicated that they would rather deal with it on their own. Of the remaining faculty members who indicated a reluctance to get involved, 73.0% indicated that nothing would be done, 13.5% indicated that it would take too much time, and 13.5% expressed fear of legal ramifications.

Discussion - Questionnaire Data

High proportions of students expressed their belief that they would be punished in some way if were caught copying from another student's exam. However, there was a great variance in the anticipated punishments. The majority of students believed that they would receive a failing grade on the assignment and/or in the course if they were caught copying from another student's exam. However, the majority of professors

indicated that they would definitely bring the student before the Judicial Panel if they could prove that the student had copied from another student's exam. Past records from the Judicial Panel indicate that when there is evidence that a student has cheated on an exam, the student is typically suspended or expelled from the University.¹⁴ As such, it seems that students are either fairly naive as to the type of penalty that would be imposed, or that an informal sanctioning process (with lesser penalties) has been used in the past.

With regard to plagiarism, the majority of students indicated that they would be punished in some way, but the most commonly cited punishment was to receive a warning. Students may be accurate in this assumption because the majority of faculty members indicated their preference to deal with plagiarism behaviours on an informal basis. Roughly one-quarter of the faculty members would bring the matter before the Judicial Panel. In the past, the Judicial Panel has imposed a six month suspension for plagiarism related behaviours.¹⁵ However, a very small percentage of students anticipated that suspension would be used as a sanction for plagiarism. A low proportion of faculty members indicated that their reason for not laying formal charges is because it would take too much time. This contradicts a recent report in the *Detroit News* that "the time-consuming process of calling a student's bluff can deter professors from pursuing cases of alleged plagiarism." (*The Detroit News*, 1995:C4).

¹⁴ For a list of the sanctions which have been imposed by the Judicial Panel, see latter portion of current chapter.

¹⁵ For a list of the sanctions which have been imposed by the Judicial Panel, see latter portion of current chapter.

Interestingly, students indicated that the most commonly anticipated punishment for cheating during an examination was that they would 'receive a failing grade on the assignment and/or in the course', however the most common response for plagiarising was that they would 'receive a warning'. This indicates that students may view plagiarism as a less serious academic offence. And, it seems that faculty members share this view because they tended to indicate that they would impose harsher penalties for copying than for plagiarism. This is a matter of concern because research conducted by Nuss (1984) has determined that students participate most frequently in those behaviours that they consider to be less serious. Similarly, Nuss' (1984) study also revealed that faculty members are less likely to take severe action when the incidents of academic dishonesty are among those they consider less serious.

Previous research indicates that faculty members may be unwilling to confront students and become involved in these situations due to the undesirable consequences that may follow, such as ruining a student's career, being involved in a lengthy process (Davis et al., 1992), or because it could adversely affect a faculty member's career (Livovsky & Tauber, 1994). However, only a relatively small proportion of faculty members surveyed in this study expressed such a unwillingness to become involved.

However, several of the faculty members indicated that they wanted to clarify their responses by adding additional written responses to these two hypothetical questions. These comments are as follows:

"...I would first investigate the facts / context and then decide"

"First on my own, with the possibility of resorting to formal charges"

“No, I would deal with it on my own and [then] report to Dept Head & Dean of Student Affairs”.

“Would depend on the severity of the case, or how alike the assignments were.”

“Given the complete lack of will on the part of the University administrators to enforce any misconduct regulations with any rigor [sic], it is remarkable to me that the level of cheating is as small as it is my course. On the other hand, I go to some trouble to discourage cheating by,

- 1/ Checking I.D.'s at all exams
- 2/ Using alternate forms examinations
- 3/ Numbering each M.C. examination and recording the number for each student
- 4/ Holding exams at one time
- 5/ Insisting on written documentation for missed examinations
- 6/ Checking all documentation submitted for missed assignments”

These comments suggest that incidents are dealt with informally, and that there is somewhat of a ‘filtering’ process faculty members decide whether they should report incidents to the Dean.

Method - Actual Sanctioning Practices

In order to determine actual sanctioning practices, the Registrar’s office at the University of Windsor¹⁶ was contacted and asked to compile a list of sanctions that had recently been imposed by the Judicial Panel.

¹⁶ The Registrar’s Office at four Ontario universities were contacted and asked to compile a summary of the imposed sanctions for any academic offences that had recently been brought before the university’s judicial panel. However, (as was discussed in the preceding chapter) not every university resolves matters of academic misconduct through the use of a judicial panel. As such, the information that each university compiled is vastly different from the information supplied by other universities. Therefore, it would be impossible to make a true comparison of sanctioning practices.

Results - Actual Sanctioning Practices

The University of Windsor compiled a summary of offences and sanctions administered by the Judicial Panel from April 1987 to November 1993. This list included: 12 incidents of 'cheating', 6 incidents of 'falsifying documentation', 2 incidents of 'altering examination', 5 cases of 'entering professor's office in attempt to secure examinations', and 1 case of plagiarism. This presents a total of 26 incidents, or an average of 5.2 per year. A summary of the offences and the sanctions is as follows:

Cheating

- Suspended for six months (2 cases)
- Course credit cancelled & required to repeat course
- Expelled for two calendar years
- Suspended for one year (5 cases)
- Suspended for one year & calculation of term registration
- Suspended for three months

Falsifying Documentation

- Suspended for sixteen months
- Suspended for one year
- Expelled for one calendar year (2 cases)
- Courses deleted from record
- Suspended for one academic year & loss of course credits completed since admission

Altering Examination

- Expelled (2 cases)

Entering Professor's Office (to secure exams)

- Suspended for one year (3 cases)
- Written admonition for three years
- Placed on disciplinary probation for three years

Plagiarism

- Suspended for six months

Discussion - Actual Sanctioning Practices

The non-precedential nature of these decisions, and the discretion used by the Judicial Panel is demonstrated by the variance in the penalties that have been awarded for incidents of academic misconduct. For example, the sanctions for 'cheating' range from a requirement to repeat the course, to a two year expulsion. Theoretically, in order to deter deviance, the perceived penalty must be certain. However, the results indicate that there is limited certainty in the apprehension of cheating, and in the application of sanctions.

One explanation is the possibility that different sanctioning standards are applied to students within different faculties. For example, a student within the Faculty of Arts who has had previous experience with writing essays may be expected to have a greater knowledge of how to avoid plagiarism than a student within the Faculty of Engineering who has limited previous experience with writing essays. This would add support for the Chapter Seven recommendation for the decentralization of academic misconduct procedures.

It is interesting to note that only one plagiarism offence which was brought before the Judicial Panel during this time period. This suggests that acts plagiarism are not being dealt with, or are being dealt with in another manner. The sanction for plagiarism (six month suspension) is relatively lenient in comparison to the sanctions that have been applied for other offences. This is consistent with the finding earlier in this chapter, that plagiarism may be viewed as a lesser offence. However, it is ironic that this 'lesser offence' is the only behaviour that the University has described in the undergraduate

handbook.

These results indicate that an average of 5.2 cases per year are brought before the Judicial Panel. As such, it is reasonable to assume that a significant proportion of incidents of academic misconduct are not apprehended, or are either resolved informally or sanctioned by the Dean of Student Affairs. Since the Judicial Panel is the only source that can impose the sanctions of suspension or expulsion, the majority of cases of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor are being sanctioned in a more lenient manner. Theoretically, since the deterrence doctrine suggests that sanctions must be severe in order to have a deterrent effect, the existing sanctioning practices at the University of Windsor may not have the effect of deterring academic misconduct.

Summary & Recommendations

The results of this chapter can be summarized as follows,

- Neither students nor faculty members have a strong knowledge of actual sanctioning practices for incidents of academic misconduct (this confirms the overestimation of policy knowledge as indicated in Chapter 6). However, it is important to acknowledge the fact that the scope of this chapter is limited to the actual sanctions that have been imposed by the Judicial Panel. Students and faculty members may actually have a stronger knowledge of the sanctions that may be utilized by informal resolution processes.
- Students and faculty members tend to view plagiarism as a less serious offence than other forms of cheating behaviour.
- There is a large variation in the sanctions that have been imposed by the Judicial Panel.

Past research has indicated that the mere knowledge of consequences would provoke some students to reconsider their actions. Specifically, one student who was

surveyed by Haines et. al. (1986) suggested,

“Let more students know what happens to cheaters by using them as an example. The next time someone cheats, let the discipline go public and not keep it behind closed doors.” (p. 15).

Therefore, the following recommendations are suggested,

- The results of all Judicial Panel hearings, and all informal sanctions should be available throughout the university community. Specifically, these results could be reported in *The Lance*, via E-mail, and via a memo to each department.
- Sanctions should include both punitive and remedial aspects.
- Students and faculty members should be educated on all types of academic misconduct, with a particular emphasis on plagiarism.

FIGURE 8.1
ANTICIPATED SANCTIONING PRACTICES
 (Student Responses)

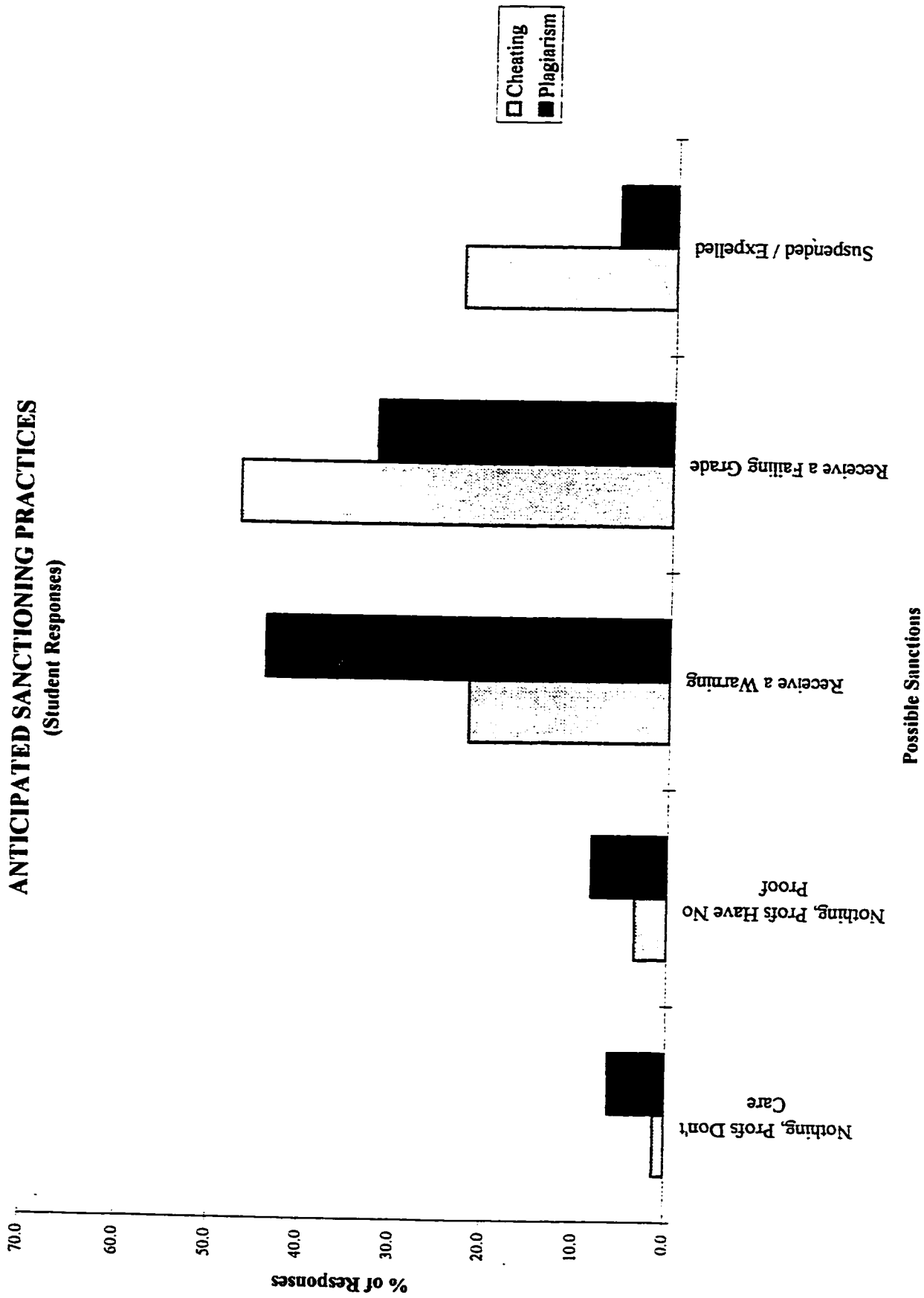
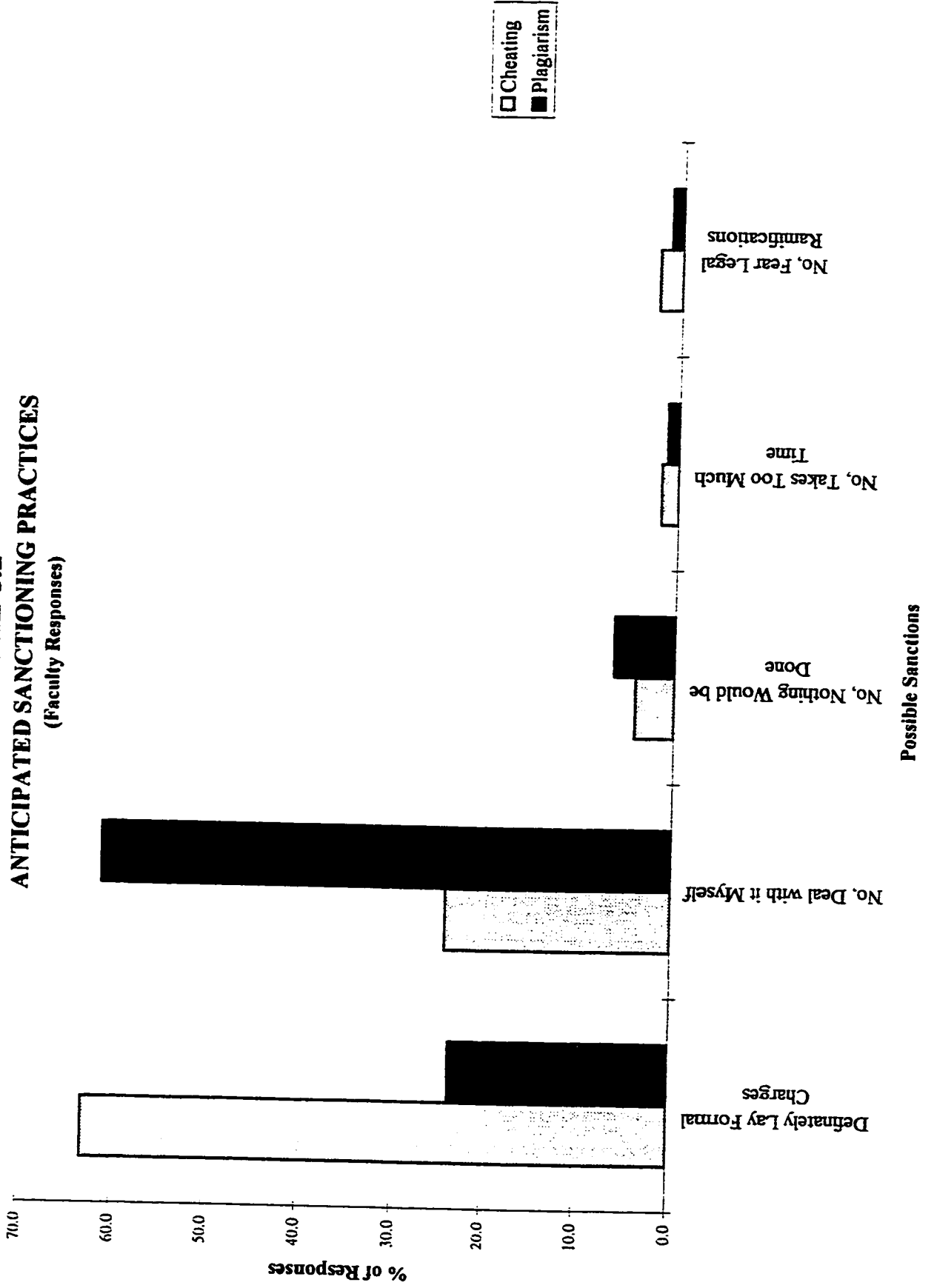


FIGURE 8.2
ANTICIPATED SANCTIONING PRACTICES
 (Faculty Responses)



Chapter Nine

Overall Summary & Recommendations

The preceding chapters have reported and discussed findings relating to academic misconduct at the University of Windsor. Overall, these results tend to indicate that the behaviour patterns at the University of Windsor are relatively consistent with previous research findings on academic misconduct.

Summary

Faculty members and students agree upon the classifications for the 'popular' forms of cheating, however there is a substantial amount of uncertainty and lack of consensus for the less 'popular' forms of cheating. This is problematic because students may not be deterred from cheating if there is confusion as to which behaviours are prohibited. Similarly, faculty members are likely to apprehend only the behaviours that fall within their own personal classifications of cheating. This unveils possible inconsistencies in the detection of incidents of academic misconduct. As well, a lack of consistent classifications makes it difficult to determine the true prevalence of academic misconduct, and makes it more difficult for the University to develop effective strategies for deterrence.

A large proportion of students at the University of Windsor do engage in academic misconduct. However, these incidents of cheating are generally not apprehended because both faculty members and students are reluctant to confront cheaters and to report incidents. The unlikelihood of apprehension may give students the

false impression the cheating is tolerated, or even accepted at the University of Windsor. This is a matter of concern because cheating behaviours are not deterred, and may actually be encouraged by such a reluctance to report incidents of academic misconduct.

Cheating persists at the University of Windsor despite the fact that both students and faculty members claim to be aware of the penalties for cheating. However, student perceptions of penalties are more lenient than actual and anticipated (by faculty members) penalties. This perception of leniency may be due to previous experiences with 'light' sanctions, or due to inaccurate information. The majority of students cited the undergraduate handbook as their source of information about penalties, but the handbook does not discuss penalties. These results suggest that students have a false sense of awareness about sanctioning practices, and that students are not deterred by the current penalties for cheating.

A significant proportion of faculty members indicated that they have typically dealt with incidents of academic misconduct on an informal basis. This could be partly attributed to the fact that there is a strong sentiment among faculty members that the current policies are ineffective. It could also be due to their own lack of knowledge of the proper procedures, or an unwillingness to become involved in the formal process. By contrast, faculty members did indicate a willingness to become involved by (hypothetically) indicating that they would be willing to bring a student before the Judicial Panel if they had proof that the student had cheated.

The need for bylaw revision, and expanded sources of information is apparent when the policies and procedures at the University of Windsor are examined and

compared with the policies and procedures in effect at other universities. The information which is provided within the University of Windsor's undergraduate handbook is comparatively poor, and the University of Windsor tends to adhere to the most complex and adversarial procedures for resolving incidents of academic misconduct.

Theoretically, these results indicate that academic misconduct is not being effectively deterred by current sanctioning policies and procedures at the University of Windsor. Possible explanations for this finding include the lack of understanding of which behaviours constitute cheating, and the inaccurate sense of awareness surrounding actual penalties and sanctioning practices. In order for individuals to be deterred from participating in prohibited behaviours, the sanctions must be swift, severe, and certain. Since complete and detailed records of all sanctions are not kept, it is difficult to provide an accurate assessment of whether these criteria are presently being met.

Overall, it would seem that the high prevalence of academic misconduct undermines and contradicts the University's objective for the advancement of learning, and it interferes with the intellectual and moral development of the members of the university community. As such, since the current policies do not seem to have a deterrent effect upon the occurrence of academic misconduct, the current policies do not meet the objectives and purposes of the University as prescribed by the *University of Windsor Act (1962-63, amended 1969)* (cited in *Bylaw 31*).

Recommendations

The results from this study indicate that in order to meet the collective needs of the university community, the current policies and procedures relating to academic misconduct are in need of revision. Perhaps the best solution is for a single unified process which is implemented and enforced by each respective faculty. The decentralization of this process would allow for greater faculty input and involvement, and therefore an increased probability that faculty members would adhere to the prescribed procedures.

Faculty members currently tend to favour an informal process of dispute resolution. However, in order to provide a greater sense of consistency, there is a need to regulate this informal process. As such, a decentralized system should offer informal mechanisms in the early stages of dealing with incidents of academic misconduct. Specifically, a mediator could be used to help the complainant and the student arrive at a reasonable solution / sanction. In the event that the parties are unable to reach an agreement, the matter should be referred to the Dean of the appropriate faculty. Each faculty Dean should be granted the authority to conduct an investigation, meet with the alleged offender, and impose a suitable sanction. Any appeals should then be addressed by the Judicial Panel. Such a process would allow both faculty members and students to be more actively involved, and would hold all parties accountable for their actions.

Each faculty should be responsible for maintaining documentation of the results from each stage of this process. These results should be summarized and reported to the Dean of Student Affairs on a semesterly basis. As well, it is recommended that any

sanctions which have been imposed by the Dean or by the Judicial Panel should be posted in each department of the respective faculty. The availability of this information has the potential to act as a deterrent because students would have access to realistic and accurate sanctioning criteria.

It must be realized that academic integrity is the responsibility of all members of the university community and as such, all members must be educated on this subject matter. The University must clarify which behaviours will be treated as academic misconduct and are subject to sanctioning. The Dean of each faculty should present this information (as well as information relating to procedures and potential penalties) at an annual seminar for all of the faculty members. Faculty members should then be required to discuss this information in their class and to provide a summary of the information on their course outlines. As well, this information should be described, in detail, within the bylaws of the University and within the undergraduate calendar.

Limitations

This study of academic misconduct is primarily exploratory in nature. As such, it is not intended to be an all encompassing investigation of academic misconduct.

Therefore, it is recognized that, as in any sociological study, there are several limitations which must be addressed.

Methodologically, it must be acknowledged that the use of self-report data draws criticism from many researchers. Haines et al. (1986) cite one of the disadvantages of using self-administered questionnaires for data-gathering as the fact that one is forced to

accept student responses without the benefit of contest. Since the emphasis of the present study is based upon self-reports of behaviour, it must be acknowledged that “the potential for discrepancy between actual behaviour and reported behaviour can be significant” (Karlins et al., 1988:360). However, the combined approach of using both questionnaire data *and* content analysis may have reduced this limitation and maximized the validity and reliability of this study.

Another issue is that the student sampling was conducted during class time. Therefore, the ‘true academic deviants’ may also be deviant in the sense that they have poor attendance, and as a result the sample may under represent the actual amount of deviance, and may cause skewed perceptions of academic misconduct. Similarly, the response rate from faculty members may be an indication that faculty participation was be limited to those who have an interest in, or an awareness of, academic misconduct.

The use of fixed choice format questions also proved to be problematic because the format imposes limitations upon the potential responses. A number of respondents demonstrated their interest in this subject matter by adding written comments to their answer sheets. Therefore, it is suggested that future studies utilize an open ended question format.

It should be acknowledged that the number of first year student participants may be slightly misleading and over represented. Specifically, since students from the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Education are generally students who have already completed an undergraduate degree they should have been categorized within the Greater than Fourth year category.

As well, since the Faculty of Law already utilizes a decentralized system and adheres to their own policies and procedures, their responses were not necessarily an assessment of the policies utilized by the greater University community. However, the policies governing academic misconduct within the Faculty of Law are quite similar to *Bylaw 31*, and therefore the findings may be transferrable.

Theoretically, a key issue of the present research is the sole reliance upon deterrence theory to explain academic misconduct at the University of Windsor. It is recognized that an integrated theoretical approach may have been more effective. However, the use of the deterrence doctrine within the current study provides the basis for recommended policy / procedural changes, and provides a foundation for future research.

Finally, it should also be acknowledged that the deterrence doctrine may not be entirely effective because some students may not be deterred by punishment (Tittle & Rowe, 1973). Specifically, it is debateable as to whether the threat of sanctions would deter students with a poor academic record who are in risk of academic probation of who are at risk of debarment.

Conclusion

Overall, this study has revealed that there is justification for a significant degree of concern surrounding academic misconduct related issues at the University of Windsor. Current policies, penalties, and procedures do not seem to deter cheating behaviours. Therefore, in order to meet the objectives and purposes of the University, there is a need

to make revisions to the current policies and procedures that govern behaviour. As well, there is a need to provide detailed education about academic misconduct to all members of the University community.

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Appendix A:

Sample of the Student Questionnaire

Academic Misconduct at the University of Windsor

Research Conducted By: Jennifer Zubick (Principal Researcher)
Dr. T. Fleming (Research Advisor)
Department of Sociology, University of Windsor

Using a HB pencil, please indicate all of your answers on the multiple choice response sheet. Please do not indicate your name or student number. Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey!

PART A

Please choose your answers for Part A from one of the following three choices:

- A = yes, this is an example of academic misconduct**
- B = no, this is not an example of academic misconduct**
- C = unsure if this is an example of academic misconduct**

Which of the following situations do you consider to be examples of academic misconduct (cheating)?

- 1/ Copying from another student's exam
- 2/ Allowing another student to copy from your exam
- 3/ Writing an exam for another student
- 4/ Getting questions / answers from someone who wrote the same exam earlier that day
- 5/ Getting questions / answers from someone who wrote the same exam last year
- 6/ Studying from an old exam that was never distributed
- 7/ Studying with friends who are in the same course
- 8/ Working on an assignment with other students when the instructor doesn't allow it
- 9/ Paying someone to write an assignment for you
- 10/ Paying someone to research an assignment for you
- 11/ Paying someone to type an assignment for you
- 12/ Submitting one of your essays to more than one course without permission
- 13/ Submitting a friend's essay with a few changes
- 14/ Using a friend's old essay to get ideas and references
- 15/ Copying a few sentences without footnoting in a paper
- 16/ 'Padding' a few items on a bibliography
- 17/ Pretending to be sick / using a phoney excuse to miss an exam or get an extension
- 18/ Asking an instructor for help / hints that were not given to anyone else
- 19/ Changing the information on an official university document
- 20/ Noticing another student cheating, but not reporting it to the instructor

PART B

- 21/ Last semester, did you cheat in any of your courses?
- A = yes, and I was caught**
 - B = yes, but I was not caught**
 - C = no, but I was accused of cheating**
 - D = no, I did not cheat at all**

- 22/ Do you know of another student who cheated last semester?
A = yes, I am aware of another student who cheated and was caught
B = yes, I am aware of another student who cheated, but was not caught
C = no, I am not aware of another student who cheated
- 23/ Since you have been at the University of Windsor, have you cheated in any of your courses?
A = yes, and I was caught
B = yes, but I was not caught
C = no, but I was accused of cheating
D = no, I did not cheat at all
- 24/ Are you aware of the penalties for cheating?
A = yes
B = no
- 25/ How did you find out about the penalties for cheating?
A = professor
B = handbook
C = other students
D = found out after I was caught
E = I am not aware of the penalties
- 26/ What do you think would happen if one of your professors saw you copying from another student's exam?
A = nothing, most professors don't really care
B = nothing, the professor has no proof
C = receive a warning
D = receive a failing grade on the assignment and/or in the course
E = suspended/expelled from the university
- 27/ What do you think would happen if your professor thought that you had copied a few sentences without footnoting in a paper or 'padded' a few items on a bibliography?
A = nothing, most professors don't really care
B = nothing, the professor has no proof
C = receive a warning
D = receive a failing grade on the assignment and/or in the course
E = suspended/expelled from the university
- 28/ Under what circumstances would you cheat on your final exams?
A = if I thought I would not get caught
B = if I didn't study hard enough
C = if I was at risk of failing the course
D = if I was at risk of being kicked out for poor grades
E = I would not cheat under any circumstances
- 29/ If you saw a student using 'crib notes' during an examination what would you do?
A = ignore the incident
B = confront the student
C = report it to the professor
D = use 'crib notes' next exam
E = unsure

Thank you very much for your participation!

Appendix B:

Sample of the Faculty Questionnaire

Information Regarding Survey Participation

Research Conducted By: Jennifer Zubick (Principal Researcher)
Dr. T. Fleming (Research Advisor)
Department of Sociology, University of Windsor

You are invited to participate in a study designed to examine instances of academic misconduct at the University of Windsor. This survey has been sent through intra-campus mail to all faculty members. The results of this study will be utilized in a Master of Arts Thesis in Sociology for the University of Windsor. In addition, the results may be used to revise existing policies at the University of Windsor.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time and/or to refrain from answering whatever questions you prefer to omit. This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete, and will request your participation on this one occasion only.

This survey has been designed to ensure confidentiality, please do not indicate your name on the response sheet. You will not be identified from the information which you provide.

The return of a completed questionnaire will be taken as an indication that you have thoroughly read and understood this information, and that you have consented to the use of your data for this research.

This survey has been approved by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology Ethics Committee. If you have a complaint regarding a procedure please contact the Head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology (Ext. 2190) for a referral to the departmental Ethics Committee.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments regarding this survey, please feel free leave a telephone message for Jennifer Zubick in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology (Ext. 2191), or by E-mail to: Zubic@server.uwindsor.ca. If you wish to see a copy of the final report, a copy will be available in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology by September 1995.

Instructions:

Please answer all questions on the red "multiple choice response sheet". Do not fold the response sheet, simply place it in the intra-campus envelope, cross your name off the front of the envelope, and return it to: Jennifer Zubick, Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Your response sheet will be separated from the envelope, in order to ensure that your responses cannot be traced to any specific person or department.

In addition, please enter the following information in the bottom right-hand corner of the multiple-choice response sheet:

- In the DATE column, under the YR. heading, please enter 90
- In the DATE column, under the MO. heading, please enter your 2-digit faculty code
- In the TEST ID column, please enter: 01 if you are a male
 02 if you are a female

Thank you very much for your participation!

Academic Misconduct at the University of Windsor

Research Conducted By: **Jennifer Zubick (Principal Researcher)**
Dr. T. Fleming (Research Advisor)
Department of Sociology, University of Windsor

Using a HB pencil, please indicate all of your answers on the multiple choice response sheet. Please do not indicate your name. Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey!

PART A

Please choose your answers for Part A from one of the following three choices:

A = yes, this is an example of academic misconduct

B = no, this is not an example of academic misconduct

C = unsure if this is an example of academic misconduct

Which of the following situations do you consider to be examples of academic misconduct (cheating)?

- 1/ Copying from another student's exam
- 2/ Allowing another student to copy from your exam
- 3/ Writing an exam for another student
- 4/ Getting questions or answers from someone who wrote the same exam earlier that day
- 5/ Getting questions or answers from someone who wrote the same exam last year
- 6/ Studying from an old exam that was never distributed
- 7/ Studying with friends who are in the same course
- 8/ Working on an assignment with other students when the instructor doesn't allow it
- 9/ Paying someone to write an assignment for you
- 10/ Paying someone to research an assignment for you
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- 17/ Pretending to be sick / using a phoney excuse to miss an exam or get an extension
- 18/ Asking an instructor for help / hints that were not given to anyone else
- 19/ Changing the information on an official university document
- 20/ Noticing another student cheating, but not reporting it to the instructor

PART B

21/ Last semester, did you suspect any students of cheating?

A = yes

B = no

22/ Last semester, did you apprehend any students cheating?

A = yes, and I brought the student before the Judicial Panel

B = yes, and I reported the incident to the Dean

C = yes, and I reported the incident to the head of my department

D = yes, and I dealt with the incident informally

E = no, I did not apprehend any students

Vita Auctoris

Name: Jennifer Lynn Zubick

Place of Birth: Port Arthur (Thunder Bay), Ontario

Year of Birth: 1969

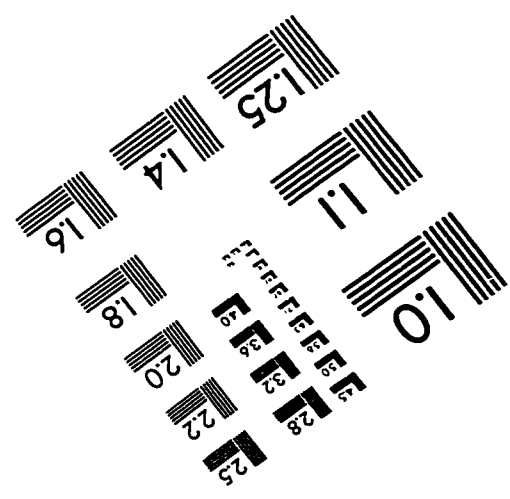
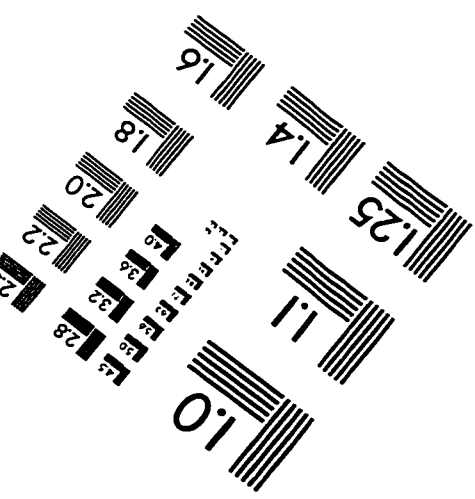
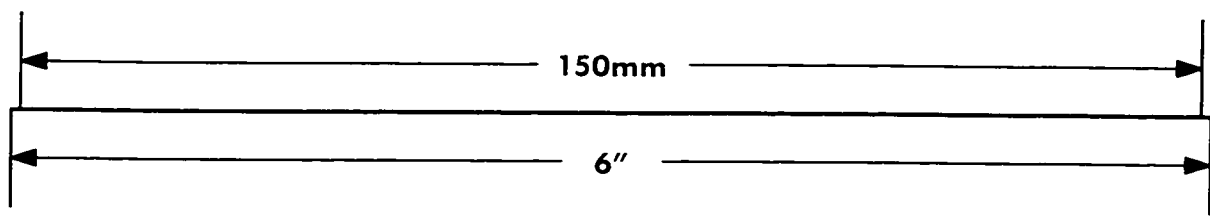
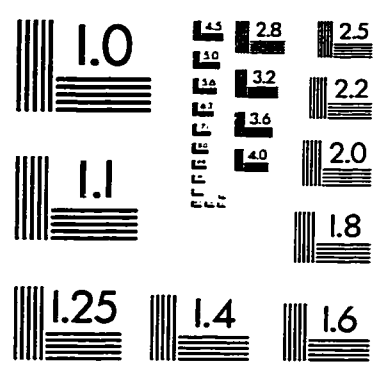
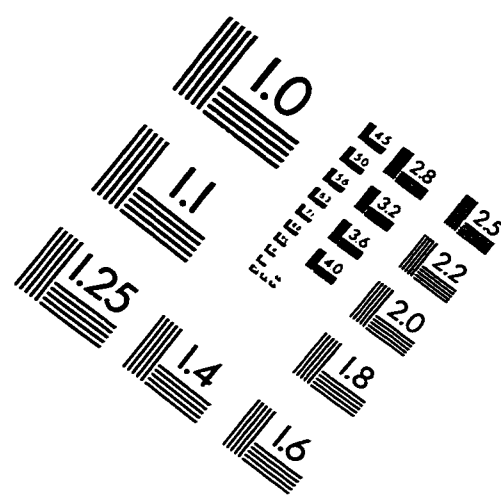
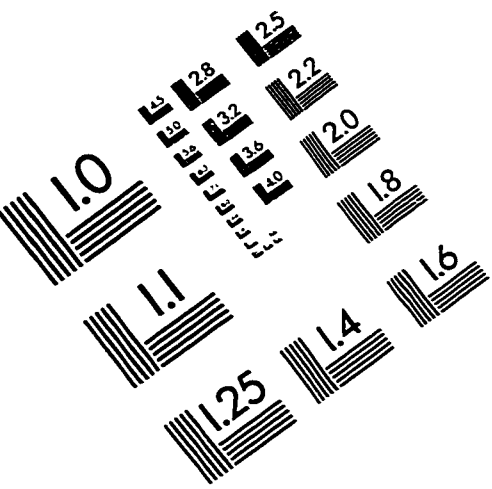
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