



## Stress and Anxiety related to Finals?

### Steps to channel that stress and avoid allegations of Academic Dishonesty

Whittier College staff and faculty care about your individualized student success!

As we head into finals, we know and understand that stress and anxiety regarding grades may be elevated due to the COVID-19 pandemic and remote learning. Both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs want to set you up for success should you start to experience feelings of worry and nervousness, so that you understand the academic integrity policy and do not get tempted, accidentally or consciously, to commit a violation of academic dishonesty.

As the Whittier College Academic Honesty Policy states:

“Students are expected to produce independent work and to cite sources of information and concepts. When these principles are breached and a student misrepresents his or her level of knowledge, the basic framework of scholarship is broken.”

<https://www.whittier.edu/policies/academic/honesty>

It is important to know that

*Technology has made it easier to cheat:*

- Students with access to internet can find articles and papers on just about any subject matter and copy and paste them for free as well as with a credit card from various websites.
- With phones, cameras and video, particularly during remote learning, students have the ability to share information or answers with one another during a test or exam as they are not proctored in an in-person format.

*Technology has created ways for instructors to detect forms of academic dishonesty:*

- Professors have access to online tools and websites including but not limited to turnitin.com, that detect plagiarism- such as inappropriate copying and citation mistakes.

If a professor detects that a student committed a form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, unauthorized collaboration, and obtaining an unfair advantage, the professor will notify the student and then submit a report of Academic Integrity Report to the Dean of Students Office to follow up with the student on and determine next steps.

## Steps to Channel Stress During Finals

*If you are currently struggling with a course and contemplating copying and pasting work found online or collaborating with a classmate on an assignment or exam- we urge you to consider these steps now, to eliminate the undue stress it could cause you later.*

1. **Talk to your Professor-Communication is Key:** Email your Professor or set up an appointment to share the stresses and concerns that you have going on in your life and how that may be affecting your school work. Please know, it is your choice as to how much and

what you feel comfortable sharing with your professor. When you share with them, let them know your desire to do well in their course and what assignment or exam is causing you stress or anxiety. They may be willing to set up a plan with you to ensure the work is completed in a manner that honors the learning that needs to take place without committing violations of academic integrity in the process. Remember, your professors cannot assist you if you do not clearly communicate with them.

2. **Talk to the Counseling Center:** The root cause of getting involved in an academic integrity case may be your stress and anxiety.
  - If you are a current client of the WCSCC, you have the option to continue treatment via telepsychology (e.g., phone or videoconferencing).
  - If you are not a current client of the WCCC, currently enrolled students may call or email the Counseling Center to schedule a phone consultation at (562) 907-4239 or [counselingcenter@whittier.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@whittier.edu). Hours are Monday-Friday, 8 am- 12pm and 1pm-5pm
  - *Let's Talk* consultation appointments are in Turner Hall (Room 247). No appointment is necessary:
    - Mondays 3:15- 4:45pm, Tuesdays 9:30am-12pm, (Jess Converse from the LA LGBT Center) 1:15-2:45pm, Wednesdays 3:15-4:45pm, Thursdays 10:15-11:45am, Fridays 1:15-2:45pm
3. **Create a Game Plan- Which may involve CASS:** Look at your syllabus and know your assignment due dates and times they must be submitted by. Having a complete timeline of all that you need to accomplish academically within the remaining days of the semester, will help you better block out your schedule and prioritize assignments that may have a bigger impact on your grade and academic goals. CASS (Center for Advising and Academic Success) is a great resource to walk through that timeline with
  - CAAS: Schedule an appointment by calling (562) 907-4816 [cass@poets.whittier.edu](mailto:cass@poets.whittier.edu). Hours are Monday-Thursday, 8am-5pm, Friday 8am-3pm

**Citation workshops this week:** how you can cite your sources properly, create meticulous works cited/reference pages, and avoid plagiarism

- Tuesday, April 28 and Thursday, April 30 from 12:30-1:30pm
- Registration and Zoom information at [whittier.libcal.com/instruction](http://whittier.libcal.com/instruction)

**For more tips on how to manage stress during finals:**

<https://www.activeminds.org/blog/6-healthy-ways-to-reduce-stress-during-final-exams/>  
<https://www.activeminds.org/about-mental-health/be-there/coronavirus/>

We understand that during these unprecedented times, you may be under a lot of personal stress, dealing and managing concerns at home as well as medical and mental health diagnosis. Though not likely, we do not want students to resort to dishonest academic practices to try to get the best possible grades or to handle the pressure of an academic program.

Believe in yourselves because we believe in you!!

Sara Espinoza, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Rights and Responsibilities

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