

Survey: Higher confidence in academic integrity of remote instruction among college instructors

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A new survey by Wiley suggests concerns about academic integrity in online courses have eased significantly among college instructors since

2020, when the transition to remote instruction was still ramping up.

Only 27 percent of [college](#) instructors who responded to the September 2021 [survey](#) said they felt students were significantly more likely to cheat in an online course than in an in-person course, down from 62 percent who said the same in [2020](#). The percentage of instructors who were neutral on this issue rose to 20 percent compared to 5 percent in 2020.

"Many college instructors worried about problems with [academic integrity](#) when courses shifted to online instruction early in the pandemic," said Jason Jordan, Wiley Senior Vice President of Digital Education. "Our findings, however, suggest those concerns were greatly allayed as instructors gained more experience with remote coursework."

While instructors still express some concern about academic integrity in online courses, the findings suggest that those fears were not realized in actual experience. The percentage of instructors who said they actually caught students cheating was only slightly higher among those teaching online and hybrid courses than those teaching in-person classes.

Measures used to maintain academic integrity

One reason for the increased confidence may be the steps taken by instructors to promote academic integrity across learning modalities. Instructors indicated they used a variety of measures to help prevent academic misconduct in online coursework and tests, including using more open-ended questions, creating question pools, giving more project-based assignments, assigning more essays, and raising awareness about cheating and its negative consequences.

Wiley builds solutions to discourage cheating into its digital educational products and services, including question pools (so that not all students

receive the same questions), value randomization (where numeric values in questions change), answer shuffling (where answers to test questions appear in different orders), generic question titles, timed assignments, password-protected assignments, and assignment availability restrictions.

The company has also worked to help instructors understand how to encourage a culture of integrity and [personal responsibility](#), offering a variety of programming on academic integrity including a virtual Summer Camp, a Higher Education Cheating Hackathon, a series of on-demand webinars for instructors and a robust library of videos and resources.

College students' attitudes don't match behavior

Wiley also surveyed [college students](#) in the study. While the majority of [student](#) respondents believe it is easier to cheat online than in person, that does not mean they actually are cheating. The majority (52 percent) said they are no more or less likely to cheat in an [online course](#), while only 28 percent said they are more likely to cheat online.

Students are split on whether they find it easier to cheat now compared to before the pandemic. Half (51 percent) said it is easier to cheat now, but 35 percent said it's the same, and 14 percent said it's harder to cheat now.

Among the factors that the majority of students say make them less likely to cheat are: if they are likely to get caught, if proctoring software is used, if getting caught would lower their grade, and if the instructor talks about the consequences of getting caught [cheating](#) at the beginning of the course.

Methodology

Wiley surveyed 2,868 college instructors and 682 students in the US and Canada for the study. More than 60 percent of the instructors in the sample teach STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) courses, while more than 30 percent teach business-related courses.

Provided by Wiley

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