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Interview With Dr. Tracey Bretag:

"A Culture of Academic Integrity Requires Commitment at Every Level of the Academic Enterprise"

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Why Do Students Plagiarize? P. 42 American Standards of Academic Integrity: An International Student Perspective

Academic Integrity: Challenges for Institutions, Faculty and Students

e-learn BLACKBOARD'S GLOBAL OPENNESS INITIATIVE

Functioning as a teaching and learning community collaboration, E-Learn is a place for educators to share ideas, insights, perspectives, and practices for the purpose of improving student success.





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From the Editor

WITH OUR FINAL PRINTED EDITION OF 2017, WE HOPE to provide you with invaluable insights into some of the more complex challenges faced by academic institutions near and far. A topic that has been pressing on our agenda has been the ever-present issue of academic integrity: why has academic dishonesty skyrocketed in recent years?

A good place to begin understanding what some might call an epidemic, is with our interview with Dr. Tracey Bretag, from the University of South Australia Business School. Dr. Bretag sheds some light on the issue of Contract Cheating, a major concern today for academic institutions worldwide. In the pages following, you will find an infographic on a cultural perspective on plagiarism, as well as an interview piece with Van Davis, Blackboard's Associate Vice President of Higher Education Research and Policy. Van talks about the impact of digital technologies on academic integrity, and narrows in on five ways to promote integrity within the classroom. To round off, we have put together a research piece dedicated to better understand plagiarism, authorship, and intellectual property, as well as a roundtable article on how two U.S. universities are preventing and fighting back against academic dishonesty. We thank Kevin Pitt from Rutgers University and Brett Christie from California State University – Sonoma, for their contributions, as well as those mentioned above. Lastly, we are pleased

This edition would not be complete without recognizing the universities and organizations that earned a Blackboard Catalyst Award for their fantastic initiatives. Special thanks to Jack Suess, John Fritz and Kevin Joseph from the University of Maryland Baltimore County, Dr. Claire Stuve from the University of Toledo, and José Armando Plata Sandoval from ASEC (Auditoria Superior del Estado de Coahuila).

to include, for the first time ever, a student guest column by Kyoungah Lee, who wanted to share her perspective on American standards of academic integrity and the international student.

We'd also like to thank the following Blackboard customers for graciously sharing their experiences with us: Apitep Saekow from Stamford International University, Mario Henare and Laura Solís from Universidad Mayor de Chile, Edward J. Evans from Texas A&M University - Corpus Christie, and Mark Simpson and Jonathan Eaton from Teesside University.

E-Learn Magazine is an initiative by and for the teaching and learning community. It is through your contribution and sharing of experiences, best practices, know-how and achievements, that we fuel this community. We invite you to continue contributing your stories for the shared benefit of this outstanding community of educators and learners worldwide.

Sincerely,

The E-Learn Team

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For more information, please contact: elearn@blackboard.com

EDITOR	PRODUCTION
Manuel Rivera	Carolina Pintor
CONTRIBUTING	SPECIAL THANKS
EDITORS	
	Katie Blot, Phill Miller, Laureano
Liliana Camacho	Díaz, Lynn Zingraf, Kyoungah Lee,
	Sheryn Anthes, Steve Hoole,
JOURNALISM	Minerva Carrizo, Rahayu Rahim,
	Sarah Gregory, Samuel Tang.
Priscila Zigunovas,	
Leonardo Tissot,	PROYECTOS SEMANA
Cristina Wagner,	
Dana Stewart,	Director
Christina Gómez.	Paola Villamarín González
PHOTOGRAPHY	Contributing Editors
	Alejandro Torres
AFP	Germán Hernández
Marlayna Demond	
	JOURNALISM
ART AND DESIGN	
	Natalia Perdigón, Martha Consuegra,
TRiiBU Studio	Christina Gómez, Laura Orozco.
Camilo Higuera, Enny	
Rodríguez, Camila	PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR Mejía, Laura Naranjo,

Alexander Villalobos.

Mario Inti García Mutis



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The Secret to Life-Long Learning Is Taking Responsibility for It



Dynamic courses can lead to higher student interest, generating enhanced learning and knowledge.

BY: CHRISTINA GÓMEZ ECHAVARRÍA BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES

WHEN INDIVIDUALS TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR OWN learning, the amount of knowledge acquired can increase significantly, due to a general awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and ability to self-assess. Taking control of one's own learning is something that will remain with the students for life as they become lifelong learners. The University of Maryland Baltimore County received the Blackboard Catalyst Award for Leading Change, due to a tool they

Socrates once said "education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel" and taking control of one's own learning can lead to life-long learning — that is the kindling of a flame.



created that shows a strong correlation between student grades and Blackboard Learn use.

In 2007, UMBC Associate Vice President John Fritz started looking at the impact that Blackboard Learn was having on its students. John believed Blackboard Learn could help students and faculty, but didn't know how to show its impact on student llearning. And so, he made it his mission to find out.

John started looking at how much time students spent on the LMS and their grades. Today, Blackboard Analytics is a tool that can do this for you, but back then it wasn't available yet. Using a homegrown analytics system, John found that students who earned failing grades used Blackboard Learn 40% less than students who received a higher grade or passed.

With these findings, John decided to build a tool called the Check My Activity tool. This application allows students to check their grades, compare their results against the rest of the class, and see the percentage of time other students were logged onto the LMS. Although John hasn't been able to confirm exactly *why* students continue using the tool, one of his theories is that it might be sparking some healthy peer competition. When students compare their grades against others, different things can happen:



THEY SEE THEY WERE ABOVE CLASS AVERAGE

They realize they did something right, and studied the subject matter correctly and understood it well. This makes them feel good, and pushes them to continue doing well.

THEY SEE THEY ARE IN THE AVERAGE PERCENTILE

-which might not spark too much of a reaction-or they see how close they were to being in the top or bottom percentiles. It helps them understand that they should probably work a little harder to stand out.

THEY SEE THAT THEY ARE IN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CLASS

which makes them feel like they "lost". It pushes them to be better, to work harder for in the future. They also see that the students at the top spent more time on the LMS, which makes them wonder how they can take control of their own learning.

Taking control of one's own learning could mean for students to actively connect to the LMS because they *want* to learn more, it means finding out what is coming up on the curriculum, what subject is coming up next, or if the teacher posted any new readings or assignments. This way students are actively engaged and interested in their academic wellbeing by being better prepared.

John further explains that it is in the teacher's power to create courses that students want to log into and continuously find out what is new and going on, and also give them the tools that make taking control of their own learning easier. Here is where course design can be of importance, because all the teaching and learning elements have to make sense and teachers should take advantage of the tools they have available to them in order to make education more enjoyable and dynamic. John is also working with faculty on how to make better use of all the tools available through Blackboard Learn in order to make their courses more dynamic.

According to John, the research literature shows,there are three main ways in which faculty use any Learning Management System (LMS) like Blackboard Learn:



CONTENT COLLECTION Syllabus and course content is uploaded by course instructor and students log into the LMS once to download the content.





COMMUNICATION

Blackboard Learn is used as a communication tool through discussion boards, announcements, and other general communication purposes. As a result, students can meet up and stay connected.



3



ONLINE ASSESSMENTS

John explains that this is the least used tactic but the most powerful. This occurs when teachers post practice quizzes and exams to help students get ready for exams. This allows students to selfassess and understand where they need more work. Moreover, collecting student's work electronically allows for adaptive release of content, which means the teacher could tell students that unless they pass a quiz, they won't be able to turn in future assignments for credit. This makes students push themselves and do the work in order to move forward in the course. With this type of class format, students have a reason to go into the LMS and be proactive in their learning. When students learn to take a real interested and be proactive, their relationship to learning can change significantly and have a lasting impact for the rest of their lives.



After having the Check My Activity Tool available to students, the university extended access to faculty as well. The tool shows teachers how actively their course is used by students compared to other courses in the same department. This has also sparked some competition between faculty who are now working towards making their courses more dynamic, aiming to get students more interested, and as result improving their grades.

UMBC and Blackboard's collaboration on the development of Check My Activity is what sparked Blackboard's interest in creating something as useful, but with a lot more resources, and thanks to this collaboration Blackboard Analytics was later born, released in 2012, giving teachers the ability to go deeper into student data and course performance.

This collaboration and the creation of both Check My Activity and Blackboard Analytics, allowing teachers to realize the correlation between LMS use and student grades, is what earned UMBC the Blackboard Catalyst Award for Leading Change, awarded for educational innovation and development of high impact educational strategies and practices or technologies that have a measurable effect on learning outcomes, student performance or academic progression.

Socrates once said that "education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel" and taking control of one's own learning can lead to life-long learning–*that* is the kindling of a flame. The use of technology clearly helps today's students achieve the strength and desire to be life-long learners.

Inclusive Learning Is Not Only for Students With Disabilities



According to the World Health Organization, there are approximately 1 billion people in the world with some sort of disability. Technology has played a significant role in making teachers aware of their students' needs, as well as including them in lessons alongside their peers. Most importantly, all students, despite disability or not, should have the opportunity to learn well the material that is presented to them, and thankfuly technology can also help in this process.

BY: CHRISTINA GÓMEZ ECHAVARRIA TOLEDO, OHIO, UNITED STATES

WHEN DR. CLAIRE STUVE, CURRICULUM DEVELOPER AND Technology Researcher at The University of Toledo, started as a college student, she had difficulty understanding the content in her classes. After struggling to be engaged and enjoy her classes, she switched universities in the hopes of finding a new route to learning. Unfortunately, she only stumbled upon the same barriers. After facing these negative experiences, she decided to earn her teaching certificate so she could help others actually learn and have a positive impact on their lives. "I thought: you know who really makes a difference in the world? Teachers," Stuve says.

Dr. Stuve understands that there are many people in the world with disabilities who face barriers in their education. She also finds that every single student in the world learns differently, and that everyone has difficulties in certain areas without necessarily having a diagnosed disability, which might hinder the learning process. And so, she decided to learn about accessibility in education.

What is inclusive learning? It is a way to make sure that your course is designed so that all students are supported and can learn effectively. Thanks to Dr. Stuve's work, she won the Blackboard Catalyst Award in Inclusive Learning, awarded to individuals whose methods ensure that their pedagogy, technology, content, and educational services are fully inclusive and supportive of all learners.

Dr. Stuve used to be a high school math teacher and decided to transfer into higher education as an educational technologist, with the aim of improving university courses by



designing curriculum foreseeing possible gaps that would prevent students from learning and being engaged. She subsequently started working in the Math Department at The University of Toldeo and designed the online trigonometry course for which she won the Catalyst Award.

When she first started the design process, all she had were the state of Ohio requirements with a list of the topics that she had to cover, along with a secondary list of optional topics she could teach. She decided to teach all topics on both lists so that students would be fully prepared for their next math course. Additionally, she created a course that was fully online, as she found that it was unpractical for students to attend face-to-face classes; students had to drive, park, and learn at times that might not be very convenient for them, and they could have jobs, among other responsibilities, aside from learning. She opted to apply a blended model to her online course, which meant that she met synchronously with her students once a week in a Blackboard Collaborate classroom to discuss topics and apply concepts to solve real world problems. She built a flipped online course, always keeping in mind to include accessibility best practices in her class, where students reviewed material in Blackboard on their own time before the synchronous session.

These are some of the accessibility best practices and tools that Dr. Stuve uses in her course:

🔝 Get to know your students

When students feel that their teacher cares about them, they strive to work harder. At the beginning of every term, she asks her students to introduce themselves and tell her about their passions and what they like to do in their spare time. She reads their responses again every week so she can follow up with her students about the things that interest them, or even include something about her students in the lesson.

Make content relevant

Rather than using textbook problems to teach, Dr. Stuve uses real life examples, such as buying a car, to explain the value



of a specific formula or graph. She not only asks her students to graph, they also discuss *why* graphing is important and the learning that can come out of a graph.

3. Video and text lessons

Some students prefer to be able to see and listen to their instructor, while others prefer reading content. As a result, Dr. Stuve records lessons in video format but also writes in her own words what she has taught. This way, students can choose between various options that help them understand the material. In addition, all videos are closed-captioned for various reasons. It might be hard to understand everything the teacher is saying, especially if there are symbols involved (such as Greek symbols, for instance), depending on the subject matter. Also, it can help students to focus.

Lessons are keyboard accessible

If students are unable to use a mouse, they need to be able to access course content using keyboard shortcuts. Even for those without a disability, this method ensures they can fully use their mouse or keyboard.

5. Course content is accessible by a screen reader

Screen readers read words and content aloud. Dr. Stuve recalls that creating content that can be read by a screen reader used to be much more difficult, but today, Microsoft Word and PDF files have an option that can be enabled to ensure a document is compatible with a screen reader. Since enhancing the learning experience is the focus, this feature allows students to have options best suited for them, instead of being restricted by a simple text document.

Refrain from using many colors and font types

Some students may have trouble distinguishing one color or font from another. Therefore, different colors and fonts should not be used to relay important information to students.



The University of Toledo has made it their objective to make classes accessible for all students. That is why individuals like Dr. Stuve, who have training in accessibility, design courses so that all students are included and have an enhanced learning experience. Moreover, the University's Student Disability Services support faculty by providing services such as closed captioning of videos.

Technology is an essential part of Dr. Stuve's math course success, as students can manipulate the technology to fit their needs and also learn on their own time. Synchronous meet-ups also play an important role in the student-teacher relationship. Dr. Stuve describes the Blackboard Collaborate sessions as a completely safe environment where students are not judged, as students can ask and interact freely using real-life scenarios to help them understand the subject. During sessions, Dr. Stuve sometimes asks her students to get into groups so they can explore a topic further, and Blackboard Collaborate's functionality allows her to do that easily. She can virtually move around the groups and check on them to see how they are progressing. Another tool Dr. Stuve finds invaluable is the Blackboard Accessible Math Editor. This math editor is a tool created by Blackboard that gives her every symbol she might need in order to create problems and formulas. In other learning management systems, she would have to look for each symbol in Google and then copy and paste it, making it very time consuming and unsustainable. The Blackboard Accessible Math Editor also makes the symbols screen reader accessible, which is essential in her course.

Dr. Stuve said that she is always very enthusiastic when teaching and even tells math jokes during her lessons to make students laugh and be engaged, which she explained is an important aspect of inclusivity. You can't be inclusive if you don't understand your students, Dr. Stuve believes.

Of all the Blackboard Catalyst Awards that are available, Dr. Stuve thinks that the Inclusive Learning Award is the most important because every student should get an equal chance to learn. The more they understand today, the more they will understand tomorrow, and what a difference they can then make in other peoples' lives in the future.

When Public Service Speaks the Same Language Thanks to Online Education

An online teaching system developed by a fiscal authority in Mexico and awarded with the 'Leaders of Change' prize in the Blackboard Catalyst Awards, has trained more than 68,000 public servants in the country's new government accounting scheme.

> BY: NATALIA PERDIGÓN SALTILLO, COAHUILA, MEXICO

SUCCESSFUL ONLINE TRAINING HAS EXPANDED BEYOND the university realm, and in Mexico, it has also caught on in the fiscal sphere. For the last year and a half, the Auditoria Superior del Estado de Coahuila-ASEC (Supreme Audit Office of the State of Coahuila), in the north of the country, has been using a teaching program to train public servants in new accounting regulations.

Mexico's constitutional reform in 2008 heralded in a general accounting law that forced all government entities to use the same scheme, so that accountability and knowledge



of accounting matters would be available to everybody and on demand at all times.

"Previously, state governments could use whatever accounting systems they felt like, and it was a true Tower of Babel for us because we had to receive different reports, different public accounts, and different rendering of accounts. The new law has benefited us tremendously," asserts Coahuila State's Chief Auditor, José Armando Plata Sandoval.

In an interview with E-Learn, the auditor talked about the joint effort with local control and supervision bodies and the Hacienda y Crédito Público de México (Ministry of Finance and Public Credit), to teach three diploma courses, namely in Government Accounting (140 hours), Financial Discipline (100 hours), and a complementary one in Municipal Budget Information Index, which lasts 50 hours.

These courses have been conducted using Blackboard Learn as the learning platform, with support from facilitators in the country's 32 supreme control and supervision bodies,



CPC. José Armando

Lic. Oscar Eduardo Rodriguez Castañeda **Director of Regulatory Affairs**

The cost-benefit ratio with the distance education scheme is much greater, but what must be comprehensive, is student assistance and detailed follow-up on work activities, with guidance and academic discipline.





PROGRAM DATA



who meet through Blackboard Collaborate. Student progress indicators are presented during regular Tuesday follow-up sessions, and support strategies are established. Follow-up meetings have resulted in 90 per cent student completion rates.

Blackboard Learn is used for locating and configuring study materials, and in each module, a leading expert and Mexican authority on supervision and accountability, presents the content via Blackboard Collaborate.

In order to take one of these courses, a minimum knowledge of accounting techniques is required, and post-secondary education is not a pre-requisite. Financing these courses is made possible through 2.7 million dollars of government funding that has been allocated specifically to these mass training sessions. To date, 8.2 million class hours have been given out, at a unit cost of ten cents per dollar.

"The advantages of distance education as opposed to face-to-face training, in terms of cost and coverage, are unquestionable," maintains Plata, who recalls that the Secretaria de Hacienda (Ministry of Finance) trained the same number of officers



face-to-face, during the previous 3 years, as ASEC has been able to in a year and a half by using online training methods.

"The cost-benefit ratio with the distance education scheme is much greater, but what must be comprehensive, is student assistance and detailed follow-up on work activities, with guidance and academic discipline," he stresses.

The success of the training program coordinated by the Auditoría Superior del Estado de Coahuila, was awarded at the recent edition of the Blackboard Catalyst Awards, in the 'Leaders of Change' category.



Above reputable US universities like University of Maryland and Northern Illinois University, ASEC was recognized for its innovation in training processes, for overcoming the challenges inherent with change, for breaking the face-toface training paradigm, and for motivating public servants to read and reflect on study materials; All through the assistance of the Blackboard Learn and Blackboard Collaborate tools.

This award, which recognizes and honors innovation and excellence in global practices by the teaching community, highlights the mass training in Mexico's general government accounting law.

"Those of us who work with short-term, high-impact projects and with a large number of users, have to extract everything we possibly can from platforms such as this one, if we are to offer a world-class education service," maintains Plata.

So far, he adds, the funding received has been used for training public employees only, but the training itself has extended to private offices that serve public entities.

The goal is to train 120,000 individuals per year, and also to launch the Government Accounting program online. In fact, jointly with Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila (Autonomous University of Coahuila), a course in open education from the Public Accounting graduate program is currently being taught.

In order to continue training the country's officials, the Auditoria Superior del Estado de Coahuila, continues to promote new courses and to implement new tools, such as Blackboard Mobile Learn, so students can access course materials more easily via their cellphones, tablets or any other mobile device.

Special Topic ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity can be understood as the ethical code of academia. As moral and ethical perceptions may vary amongst different cultures and generations - in an increasingly collaborative, globalized, and information-based world - it is imperative for educational institutions, educators, teachers and instructional designers to consider different perceptions of academic integrity in their practice and strategies.

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ACADEM

American Standards of Academic Integrity: An International Student Perspective



Interview With Dr. Tracey Bretag: "A Culture of Academic Integrity Requires Commitment at Every Level of the Academic Enterprise"

> Dr. Tracey Bretag has dedicated the past 15 years to academic integrity research. She is an Associate Professor and Director of the Office for Academic Integrity at the University of South Australia, where she led The Academic Integrity Standards Project, The Exemplary Academic Integrity Project and the Contract Cheating and Assessment Design Project (currently in progress). Dr. Bretag is also the founding Editor of the International Journal for Educational Integrity, which disseminates research on that subject across all sectors.

> > BY: CRISTINA WAGNER AND TRACEY BRETAG ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

IN THIS INTERVIEW, SHE TALKS ABOUT THE RISE OF contract cheating, the importance of establishing supportive mechanisms for academic integrity policies and the challenges that new technologies have brought to the subject.

E-LEARN: How would you define academic integrity and why is it so important in academia?

TRACEY BRETAG: According to the International Center for Academic Integrity, in the United States, academic integrity is premised on five fundamental values: **honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility**. These values are put into practice through the additional virtue of courage. In Australia, we tend to talk about what it means for the academic community to put into practice those values. If the students don't work honestly, they won't be learning that much. A classic example of that is if students cheat in an exam, they don't have the prerequisite knowledge they need for the next subject or level, or indeed for professional practice. It's also important for the value of people's qualifications, because if employers or other sectors in higher education



Dr. Tracey Bretag Associate Professor, University of South Australia Business School A culture of academic integrity requires a commitment at absolutely every level of the academic enterprise.



cannot trust that your qualification is obtained honestly, then that undermines their trust in graduates' abilities. It's also important for the institution's reputation. And finally, when we go out into professional practice, if we haven't earned those qualifications honestly, we put the public's safety at risk. Here's an easy example: if a doctor is doing an operation, if that doctor has cheated on exams, as a patient you don't want to worry that he or she really knows the difference between your pancreas and your liver, right?

E.L: In your opinion, what are the main causes of academic dishonesty?

T.B: I think academic dishonesty, or breaches of academic integrity, are really systemic issues. In terms of higher education, its whole focus has changed through the years. The massification and the internationalization of higher education have had an impact in many ways. When we have second language learners, students from disadvantaged backgrounds or those who are educationally less prepared, we need to put appropriate support in place so that they can achieve their learning potential. We have increasing competition at every level: for places in a university, for jobs when students graduate, for research funding, for institutional reputation and so on - so competition is everywhere. And digital disruption and new technologies have made more and more information available, and it hasn't actually increased our learning and our capacity to think critically. All of those things had come together to create a "perfect storm" where students have started to see their qualifications as simply pieces of paper that they should get so that they can get a job. They don't understand that they are at that institution to study, to learn, to be personally transformed so that they can contribute to the transformation of society.

THE FIVE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY



NEXT BIG CHALLENGES



Online translation and paraphrasing tools

And then, on top of all of those things, we've got personal motivations. Some people in education cheat, just as there is a small percentage of people in wider society who cheat. Finally, particularly in higher education, there's a lack of genuine support, funding and resources for really good teaching and learning practices. The fact of the matter is, in higher education what really is rewarded is research. And to be really good in teaching, you need to have time for scholarship and to work on your teaching material. Ultimately, this results in both staff and students being unengaged in the learning process.

E.L: Your research projects reviewed policies and procedures related to academic integrity, as well as the way universities educate students and staff about that subject. What were your findings?



T.B: There's no point in talking about academic integrity unless you have a really good policy in place. We looked at policies in Australian universities. And we looked at five core elements of exemplary policy: access, that means the policy is easy to locate and read; approach, meaning it should have an educative rather than a punitive focus; responsibil*ity*, and that means that a good policy articulates the responsibilities for all stakeholders, not just students; detail, in the sense that the students and staff need to go to the policy and understand what academic integrity is, what a breach of integrity is, and what the processes are for dealing with that; and support, that is, you can't just talk about it, but you have to provide proactive and embedded systems to enable the implementation of the policy. We did a very large survey of around 15,000 students, and the big finding was that there are mixed understandings about academic integrity policy and process, and that students don't always understand what they have to do. In particular, our international, second language students were two to three times more likely to say they didn't understand what academic integrity was, even with support. Not surprisingly, they reported that they have been involved in academic integrity breach investigations at a higher rate than local students. If you don't understand what academic integrity is, of course you're going to find it hard to demonstrate it in your work. And a surprising finding was that our postgraduate research students said they needed more support and resources around academic integrity, so that they also could do their work with integrity.

E.L: Has your research revealed differences between occurrences of online learning plagiarism compared to face-to-face education?

T.B: In my most recent research, on contract cheating, again we had over 15,000 responses

from students across 12 institutions in Australia. We found that there's very little difference in the types of academic integrity breaches between online and face-to-face students. What we did find is that it tended to be more collusion, which is unauthorized collaboration, in a face-to-face environment, because students on campus have a lot more social capital, but often cross the line into collusion. That was one interesting finding, but other than that, it was similar. The other thing that we found is that a lot of cheating happens in online quizzes that students might be asked to do in a face-to-face environment. Educators need to be very mindful of the possibility of academic integrity breaches, whether the students are completely online, or whether it's in a face-to-face environment.

E.L: What are the reasons why students look for contract cheating?

T.B: There are a couple of reasons why they do that. One of them is the proliferation of marketing-savvy online commercial providers. Students have always engaged in outsourcing their work to some extent, but now it's not just your friends and family that might help you, there are these incredible marketing-savvy online providers. And now students, particularly the second language international learners, who are struggling often in the western environment with the new learning requirements, are targeted by those unscrupulous cheat sites. They even infiltrate the universities systems, promoting their services through official email and social media sites. To make it



more confusing, these unscrupulous cheat sites often use publicity to pretend they're legitimate university services. I think at times it can be really confusing for students to differentiate between appropriate tutoring and support services, and those "services" that are really cheat sites in disguise.

E.L: What other challenges arise from these new technologies?

T.B: We have seen so many challenges over the last 15 years about plagiarism and students copying and pasting from online sources. To a large extent, those issues have been addressed through the development of very good text-matching software, as well as other learning support resources. Our next big challenge alongside contract cheating is a whole new technology around online paraphrasing and translation tools. For example, an article written in Chinese. You can, at a click of a button, translate that into English very well, and then you can click another button, using other software, which will paraphrase that text so that it doesn't get picked up by text-matching software. These tools are so easy to use and very difficult for markers to detect.

E.L: What could universities in other countries learn from the results of your studies?

T.B: The big lesson is that there is no quick fix to this issue. This is very complex. A culture of academic integrity requires a commitment at absolutely every level of the academic enterprise, from the way you market your university, the way you recruit students, the orientation you provide to students when they first come to your institution. And then when students know what academic integrity is, you need to keep talking about it and provide training to teaching and

administrative staff. But teachers need to have real resources so that they have time and the support to develop engaging. authentic assessment which will not only promote learning, but will be less likely to be outsourced. I'm not suggesting that we're going to eradicate cheating through assessment, but we are certainly going to address it to some extent. We need to understand the benefits and the downfalls of new technologies and be constantly adapting to address that. Let's say, for example, the big push is for online education, but what does it mean in terms of authenticating the identity of students who you'll never meet? The other thing that has come from our studies is that there is no point in talking about academic integrity if there are no real consequences when there are breaches. And we need to reevaluate what is happening, what are the issues we need to address, keep on top of technology and continuously learn about it. There is a very large international community working together to address those many issues. We should not get despondent that cheating is occurring, but get excited about what we can do to make cultures of integrity the norm in education.

Tips on How to Develop an Effective **Academic Integrity Policy**



 Follow the five core elements of an academic integrity policy: access, approach, responsibility, detail and support.

• **Get help.** On the Exemplary Academic Integrity Policy website, there is software that helps with policy development. It provides many tips and examples for the proper development of policies so you don't have to start from scratch.

Listen to your stakeholders. Consult all stakeholders in your academic community to collectively develop a document. Students should take part in the development of this policy. If you come up with a policy that everybody owns, it is more likely to be complied with.

Why Do Students Plagiarize? A Cultural Perspective

It is becoming a well-known fact that international students are at significantly higher risk to committing plagiarism. According to The Times newspaper, in the United Kingdom, students from outside the European Union were more than four times as likely to cheat in exams and coursework.1 Similar numbers were found by the Wall Street Journal: public universities in the United States registered 5.1 reports of alleged cheating for every 100 international students, versus one report per 100 domestic students.² Find out some of the reasons why this is happening, especially with written assignments.

> BY: PRISCILA ZIGUNOVAS INFOGRAPHIC BY: TRIIBU Studio

KNOWLEDGE AS A SHARED PROPERTY_

Many non-Western cultures have different views regarding originality and textual ownership. In Korea, for example, the traditional belief is that there is no such thing as an original idea or thought.3 As a result, the perspective that an author owns his or her text, may not be a common concept in the student's cultural background. Because of that, students may not have experienced the same emphasis on attribution of sources.4 In China, for instance, plagiarism is often encouraged as a way to honor the author, or seen as a form of flattery. In India, a word to suggest plagiarism does not even exist, and attribution of sources is only required if the author is renowned.3



RESPECT FOR _____

International students often do not think that they can enhance the writing and ideas of someone who is an authority on a particular subject.⁵ Because of that notion, they may have difficulties paraphrasing, criticizing other people's work and writing book reviews, for example. They may find it difficult to critique the work of someone who has more knowledge on the matter.



DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES

International students may have to adapt to an entirely different academic culture and learning style. Learning by rote memorization is a common practice in nations such as India and China. In those cultures, reproduction of text without error may be considered proof that students have read it.3 Memorization is seen as a form of respect for the author, and students who recite information verbatim commonly receive higher grades.⁵ Additionally, during their school years, many students may not have had access from information beyond textbooks, so they may never have faced the question whether copying from the internet is permitted.

HOW T

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EXAM-ORIENTED _ CULTURES _____

In many cultures, educational institutions place a greater emphasis on exams rather than homework, written assignments and presentations. Students from countries such as South Korea, Japan, India and Pakistan may be used to the notion that homework does not have much importance towards the final grade. Since in their countries exams are much more significant, spending time doing homework may seem counterproductive to them.³



PRESSURE TO _____ BE SUCCESSFUL

The pressure for good grades may be higher for a student who depends on a scholarship or faces the threat of a potential loss of visa.⁵ There may also be financial and family pressures for the students to get higher grades which will lead to better jobs.⁴

LIMITED WRITING EXPERIENCE _

Some international students may not have experience writing research papers that require personal opinions and critical thinking.⁶ The purpose of writing assignments in countries like Japan and China are usually to practice what one is learning, rather than producing original theories or ideas. Students also may have trouble understanding the characteristics of different types of writing assignments.³

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DIFFICULTY EXPRESSING ______ THEMSELVES IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE.



For students who speak English as their second language, it takes longer to read and write.⁶ They may feel unable to express their thoughts, or they may think that what is already written in English expresses what they want to say better than if they had written it themselves.⁴



GREATER EMPHASIS _ ON COLLABORATION

International students may have a stronger sense of community, and they may not hesitate to help each other and ask to see their notes or assignments. They may not see collaboration and helping others as a way of collusion.³

MINIMAL CONSEQUENCES

Consequences for cheating vary from country to country. Nations like the United States and the United Kingdom tend to be much stricter — students can fail the course or even be suspended or expelled. However, copying text without attribution and downloading papers from the internet may not be seen as severe violations in countries like India or China, and therefore, there may be no serious consequences for such actions in those regions. As a result, students tend not to pay attention to plagiarism rules.³

Be Aware

Different countries can have very diverse conceptions on plagiarism and authorship. These distinct interpretations are not wrong or less advanced than the traditional western conception (see article on page 32). It is important to note that the data gathered here about specific countries may not be representative of the whole nation - China and India, for example, are large countries with significant regional diversity. Also, this information may not be true to all people, since there are individual issues in question, so it is important not to stereotype students.

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We Need to Talk About Integrity

Van Davis, Blackboard's Associate Vice President of Higher Education Research and Policy, shares his experience as a former history professor and affirms: "We are at the precipice of a shift in terms of how we think of ownership in a digital environment."

BY: PRISCILA ZIGUNOVAS AUSTIN, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

"I ONCE TAUGHT A CLASS WITH A LARGE JAMAICAN STUDENT contingent, and I discovered that because they came out of a different educational and cultural environment, they had a different understanding of ownership and collaboration. In the middle of the semester I realized, when an accusation of plagiarism came up, that what I was defining as plagiarism — in this case it was a student that had helped another one write a paper to such extent that I felt like it was no longer that student's work — the students did not see as plagiarism, because that was not the intent. They saw the behavior as a collaborative venture that was culturally appropriate for them to be helping each other out. That made me really begin to understand how our cultural position could change the way that we think about ownership and attribution of material," recalls Van Davis.

Early in his career, Davis, who holds an M.A. and a Ph.D. in 20th century United States history from Vanderbilt University, spent a decade as a professor and academic administrator. "As a faculty member, I taught writing intensive courses and worked closely with the Composition and Rhetoric faculty. Students performed a lot of writing for my courses and because of that, I had to deal with academic integrity on a regular basis," tells Davis. "I think what really interests me about the topic now is looking back and seeing all of the mistakes that I made."

For Davis, although there are going to be students who absolutely know what they are doing is academically dishonest, more often than not students were not doing it deliberately — like the ones in the story above. "They were doing it because they were sloppy, or they made a mistake, or they had a different understanding of what collaboration was. And rather than taking those [instances] as opportunities to have deeper conversations with them that would allow them to reflect on this, I responded in a punitive manner. That is something that I regret when I look back at my teaching career, and something that I would do very differently now."

Digital Revolution

Having started a teaching career at the beginning of the digital age, Davis is interested in looking at how digital technology changes our understanding of academic integrity. "It is very easy to copy and paste something, just in terms of the technical ease of being able to take material from one place and put it someplace else. But I think that the digital age has shaped the conversation on a more philosophical level because we are seeing cultural shifts take place," he suggests.

Van Davis, Ph.D.

Associate Vice President, Higher Education Research

& Policy at Blackboard Inc.

"One example of this is when you look at the culture of remix, or the culture of sampling, whether that be in music, or in architecture, or in art. It is becoming second nature to people to pick pieces of other works and change them to become something new."

According to Davis, the digital age is also shaping how we think about information. **"There is a** greater emphasis now on collaboration and



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we have Web 2.0 tools that enable that. Most employers see collaboration as a critical competency and, so, if you are working on a wiki, everybody is contributing. Somebody else's words become part of this greater whole that you are all creating. That's a different way of thinking about information and the creation of knowledge."

Another example, he says, would be the idea of knowledge in the public commons. "We see the creation of knowledge increasingly as a public participatory event. It's a very huge shift away from this more traditional western idea of single ownership of information, which, quite frankly, is what western copyright law is based on."

For Davis, that cultural shift may point to what seems to be a disconnect between students and faculty. "We are at the precipice of a shift in terms of how we think of ownership in a digital environment. Sampling, mixing and remixing are a wonderful example of this. If you can take snippets of somebody else's work and put them together in a different way to create something that is fundamentally different and more than its component pieces, is that your creation? Or is that a co-creation? Engineers, for example, have to collaborate every day. At what point does the sum of their contributions transcends each contribution and becomes something very different and unique?"

Multiple Literacies

According to Davis, some of the best research and writing on academic integrity is happening in the context of multiple literacies. "Learning how to clearly attribute information in the digital age is a facet of digital literacy. Understanding what to do with information, how to use it and what it means in the digital context, that it as much a type of literacy as writing is a type of literacy, or as math is a type of literacy."

Digital literacy can be defined as a person's ability to use digital technology, communication tools or networks to locate, evaluate, use and create information.¹ Or, more broadly, as the ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment, including the ability to read and interpret media, to reproduce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments.²

However, it could be a mistake to assume that students know how to use technology properly. "We probably should not assume that faculty and students have the same set of values around using technology. For example, students and faculty may not agree on the appropriate use of technology. So we need to have a value conversation as well as a technical conversation about technology usage."

According to Davis, **one of the challenges that digital learning programs with internationally diverse student bodies face is the variety of cultures, all of which may have different understandings of originality, creativity, and ownership.** That makes the conversation more complex and nuanced. "In China, for example, the idea of replicating a master teacher's work is considered the highest form of flattery," says Davis. "In digital learning, where you obviously have a greater opportunity to draw students from a number of different cultures, those sorts of challenges are going to come up on a more regular basis."

Davis suggests that research and literature on this subject is starting to shift away from how students are plagiarizing, or how do you

One of the challenges that digital learning programs with internationally diverse student bodies face is the variety of cultures, all of which may have different understandings of originality, creativity, and ownership. catch a student in the act of plagiarizing, and beginning to look more at *why* these actions are taking place. "Are there cultural reasons at work? Are there different understandings of digital literacy at work? I think that one of the trends in this area is that people are beginning to shift away from the *how* and talking more about the *why*."

Five Ways to Promote Integrity in the Classroom

I. **Start a conversation.** Dedicate classroom time to have a conversation with your students about what academic integrity is and create shared frameworks and values that students can feel ownership in. "If they do not feel that ownership, then they are not going to care, that is human nature," says Davis. "As faculty, that means engaging students in deeper conversations about what do they think integrity means, why do they think it's important to have this conversation, how does it connect to their academic and professional careers."

Do not assume guilt. "When you see a student who has clearly copied and pasted something, it is very easy to assume they have cheated, rather than to assume that they have made a mistake, or that they may not fully understand what they have done," says Davis. Instead, use the incident as a learning opportunity. "Looking back, my academic integrity policy was a zero-tolerance policy. If I found a student had committed an act of academic dishonesty, then they failed the class. I would not do that now. I would instead look at it as an opportunity for some reflective learning — assigning a reflective essay, asking students to actively think about what they have done and why they have done it, and placing it within a larger ethical context."

3 Focus less on having students replicate knowledge and more on having students apply their knowledge.

"It is easier to cut and paste something if you are writing an informational term paper, because all that you are doing is presenting information. It is much more difficult to plagiarize something if you have an application-based project. I think faculty should really think about what types of assignments



they are making, because the application of knowledge is a deeper and more complex critical thinking skill, and those are the skills that faculty are going for, not the more rudimentary recitation of information," says Davis.

See integrity as a competency to be developed. "We define competency loosely as knowledge, ability and skills, and integrity is always a cultural construction. As a cultural construction, one can learn what that construction is; why that construction has come to be; and then what it means. For example, what are the skills associated with making sure you are behaving, in this case in an academic environment, in a way that mirrors integrity," says Davis.

Provide students with very clear examples of what is expected of them.

"What constitutes plagiarism? What does it mean to appropriately cite this material? In which circumstances do you attribute words or ideas to somebody else and in which circumstances can you assume it is general knowledge? Provide students with very clear examples of what it means to plagiarize and what it means to give appropriate attribution," suggests Davis. Additionally, do not assume that talking about academic integrity once will be enough. "That is something you have to constantly address through conversations and reminders."

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Integrity, Originality and Authorship: Evolving Concepts

Goethe once said "There is nothing worth thinking but it has been thought before; we must only try to think it again."¹ In an increasingly collaborative, information-based world, is our view of textual ownership becoming outdated?

BY: PRISCILA ZIGUNOVAS

INTEGRITY IS OFTEN DESCRIBED AS ADHERENCE TO moral or ethical principles.² Academic integrity, for its part, comprehends a set of well-accepted rules followed by the most renowned universities, mainly western institutions, which receive students from all over the world. However, in order to understand how these rules were created – many of them regarding academic writing – we need to first understand western views of ownership of text.

The western ideological perspective of textual ownership sees the author as the single creator

of his texts. In this context, plagiarism is considered as a violation against the author and thereby is morally wrong.³

Alastair Pennycook, distinguished professor of Language, Society and Education at the University of Technology Sidney, however, sees plagiarism as a more complex phenomenon that is associated to the relationships between text, learning and memory.

In his view, what defines plagiarism is the way cultures understand the notions of authorship and textual ownership. The ownership of text, he argues, is a western concept originated in the Enlightenment era, when there was a shift from a mimetic, biblical, premodern paradigm, to a productive, modern way of thinking.⁴

In the premodern paradigm, individual creativity was attributed to a divine inspiration. As a result, literary work was un-authored during this period. The Enlightenment replaced that point of view for a new one according to which "Imagination was no longer a mimetic capacity, but a productive force." The humanist subject became "the centre of creativity;" that and the notion of property rights "produced an understanding of individual ownership of ideas and language. [...] This understanding of imagination is clearly closely tied to the development of the notion of the author," Pennycook writes.⁴



The conceptions of copyright and intellectual property first appeared in British law around 1710.⁴ It was the beginning of authorship as western societies now understand it, based on a capitalist view of property and ownership, that resulted in the current concept of plagiarism as it is accepted in educational institutions. "It assumes that everything of value can be owned, bought, and sold and that ideas, knowledge, and art are created by individuals who have the rights of ownership," researchers Lea Calvert Evering and Gary Moorman write.⁵

Postmodern Questions

But what does it mean to be an author? Is it possible to write only original ideas? Can an author really own an idea? In the 19th century, some new conceptions appeared and the modernist paradigm begins to be called into doubt.

Pennycook points out that "The notion of the individual as creative guarantor of meaning and originality, this particular vision of self and authenticity, has taken a fair battering since Marx, Freud, and others have questioned the notion of the unmediated and authentic expression of self."⁴

According to him, the postmodern and poststructuralist positions on language, discourse, and subjectivity, raise serious questions for any notion of individual creativity or authorship. "If, instead of a Self or an Identity, we consider the notion of subjectivity, or indeed subjectivities (we are, in a sense, the fragmented products of different discourses), then we arrive at more or less a reversal of the speaking subject creating meaning: we are not speaking subjects but spoken subjects, we do not create language but are created by it."⁴ To Pennycook, the postmodernist view has moved from "the author owning and

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giving meaning to text to the notion that meaning is derived from the interaction with a text."3

Pennycook cites Richard Kearney to suggest that "Postmodernism casts a suspecting glance on the modernist cult of creative originality," a kind of skepticism that points to the need to "reevaluate beliefs in originality and textual ownership." He writes, "There is a degree of hypocrisy in the defense of the culture of originality because postmodern understandings of language and meaning, by contrast, point to the possibility of little more than a circulation of meanings."3

Digital Revolution

It was 1967, three decades before the beginning of the internet as we know today, when Roland Barthes wrote The Death of the Author. In his essay, the French literary critic argued that "All writing is itself this special voice, consisting of several indiscernible voices, and that literature is precisely the invention of this voice, to which we cannot assign a specific origin: literature is that neuter, that composite, that oblique into which every subject escapes, the trap where all identity is lost, beginning with the very identity of the body that writes."6

Deceased in 1980, Barthes never came to know the World Wide Web and the technologies and collaborative tools now available that have made the boundaries of authorship so hazy. Traditional definitions of plagiarism are being challenged by the digital revolution, indicating perhaps an approximation with a postmodernist line of thought, and also with Barthes ideas about the changing concept of authorship.

What does it mean to be original in a society where the circulation of ideas and information is so intense and incessant? Consider, for example, a collaborative website like Wikipedia. If hundreds, or even

What defines plagiarism is the way cultures understand the notions of authorship and textual ownership.

thousands of people are contributing to write a more accurate, complete article about a specific subject, who is the author of that? And beyond that, does it matter? Couldn't it be that the sum of individual contributions is creating something richer and better?

For researchers Evering and Moorman, easy access to massive amounts of information are making policing for ownership of ideas nearly impossible. "This situation has caused the current millennial generation to see knowledge ownership, acquisition, and distribution in radically different terms than in previous generations. Clearly, academia is past due in reevaluating the concept and how we deal with it in secondary and higher education."5

They argue that, since much of the content on the internet is free, in their lives outside of school it is second nature for millennials to download, copy, and paste. "Their concept of ownership is different from the one their teachers and professors grew up with and have come to take for granted." According to the researchers, additional analysis and definition of intellectual property is needed by both students and faculty.5

Another issue is the expectations and academic standards imposed on millennials. In assignments that emphasize creativity, innovation, and collaboration, it may be difficult to credit the original source. Also, as collaboration is becoming one of the most desired competencies for 21st century companies, students are highly encouraged to use tools such as wikis, social media and document sharing and editing platforms. "Web 2.0 tools designed to foster digital literacy and socially constructive online learning experiences have altered conventions and cultural norms for writing," say Evering and Moorman.5

Ideological Arrogance?

There are also cultural considerations to be made. The emphasis on creativity and authorship typical of the West is not followed in many cultures around the world, especially in Asian nations, where knowledge can be seen as a shared property rather than an individual possession (see infographic on page 24).

Students that come from these cultures to attend western universities often struggle to understand very different concepts and rules about academic integrity, since the modernist interpretation of textual ownership is still eminent in western academia, with an emphasis on individual ownership of text and the need for attribution.

Hong Jian, a researcher from Xishuangbanna Vocational & Technical Institute, compares learning styles of American and Chinese students in a paper called A Contrastive Study of Cultural Diversity of Learning Styles between China and the United States.7 He concludes that "Due to cultural diversity, Americans [...] emphasize the pragmatism of the knowledge, but to some extent, the result of teaching and learning styles lead to lack of systematical knowledge. In contrast, owing to the deep-rooted influence of Confucianism for thousands of years, harmony,

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unity, and hierarchy are important considerations for Chinese students in the process of learning. Its teaching puts more emphasis on transmission of systematical knowledge, ignoring the cultivation of creativity and innovation," he explains.

In order to reduce the number of violations due to unintentional cheating, institutions should develop specific policies and support mechanisms for foreign students. It is important that faculty is flexible and understands that they come from a different sociocultural environment, and teach them writing techniques so that they know how to put into practice a new interpretation on integrity, as opposed to criticizing or invalidating their knowledge, learning style or educational experience.

Deriding other cultures for their supposedly imitative cultural practices may be a form of ideological arrogance, as Pennycook points out. "The important point here is that whereas we can see how the notion of plagiarism needs to be understood within the particular cultural and historical context of its development, it also needs to be understood relative to alternative cultural practices."

Defining what it means to act with integrity in academia might become more and more challenging as the world turns increasingly globalized and digital. What we know for sure is that institutions will need to strive to understand the needs and conceptions of the incoming student generations. It may be time to rethink some of the western notions of textual ownership, and look at the collaborative world that is emerging from a refreshed and more flexible point of view.

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How Two U.S. Universities are Preventing and Combating Academic Integrity Breaches in Higher Education

Competitiveness, non-affordable textbooks, and international students used to different standards when it comes to plagiarism, are amongst the biggest challenges for universities when it comes to academic integrity. Despite all the obstacles, directors at Rutgers University and California State University, reveal strategies to prevent and stop the increasing cases of academic dishonesty in America's higher education institutions.

BY: LEONARDO TISSOT

WITH MORE THAN 250 YEARS OF ACADEMIC HISTORY, never before has Rutgers University encountered so many cases of academic integrity violations. During the 2016-2017 school year, 686 cases of academic dishonesty were registered, a 77% increase since 2011, and an average of 16% increase per year in the 2011-2017 time period. "Our numbers are exploding," says Kevin Pitt, director of the Office of Student Conduct – a department that supports the educational goals of Rutgers University by facilitating processes that assist students in making better choices in regards to their behavior. The fact that the university currently has only one staff member fully dedicated to this issue is not stopping them from improving their methods. "This is a huge issue, to the point where we have a task force here on our campus to look deeper into it," he adds.

Pitt is concerned, but he's not the only one. The number of violations is also becoming one of the main concerns nationally amongst Rutgers' peers. But they are not waiting for the problem to go away. Rutgers and many other schools are working harder than ever to face academic dishonesty, especially when technology plays a major part of students' lives, and makes it easier to cheat, plagiarize and fabricate papers. In fact, Rutgers defines violations into seven types, which also include facilitation of dishonesty, academic sabotage, violation of research or professional ethics, and violations involving potentially criminal activity.



But who are the main 'villains' in this tale? Well, there's no doubt that social media has a lot to do with the increasing numbers of violations in American universities. But not just that: technology, in general, can and is being used to get straight A's, even when students haven't got a clue of what's been going on in the classroom – especially virtual ones.

"Of course, with technology, it's easier than ever. With smartphones, smartwatches, all types of devices that facilitate to download a paper, to solve a math problem, to Google an answer. There are so many websites that you can use that make it a lot easier to cheat," says Pitt. But technology can also be used to find who is cheating. "You can use technology to trace them," he admits. "But it's like, when you build a wall, you just need to get a bigger ladder. And technology, in general, is always changing. So that's what makes it more difficult for us to keep up with cheaters."

Competitiveness and International Students Are Key Factors in the Growth of Violations

However, technology can't take all the blame. There's a multitude of reasons as to why students are breaking the rules. Getting a great GPA (Grade Point Average), going to an amazing college and succeeding in the job market, is becoming more and more competitive each year. One point in a student's GPA could make the difference between getting into the law or medical school of their choice, or even getting a position in an exclusive firm on Wall Street, for that matter.

"They're more out of the classroom now in an attempt to distinguish themselves and their resumes.





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strategy to lower violation cases. "I think that's something unique that we're doing here at CSU. We partner with bookstores, vendors and libraries. And we also work to increase faculty awareness about more affordable content options for their courses, so this is less of an obstacle for students and less of a temptation for them in trying to go around the content and sometimes cheat," says the director.

Knowing Your Data and Visiting the Countries Your Students Are Coming From Is the Answer to Fighting Academic Violations at Rutgers

Rutgers also has unique ways to fight this 'academic epidemic.' "We're really focused on data," says Pitt. "We're digging in our data here at Rutgers and finding out what classes they are cheating the most on, what year they are, what their typical GPA is, their gender and race. We're doing all that we can to find out more."

The pressure is there to cut corners," Pitt says. Which bring up a good point. To get that A, or that extra advantage point, students are becoming busier and trying to do more with their time. But there's just not enough hours in a day to do everything they set themselves to accomplish. Also, the cost of higher education has increased in America, so a lot of students are working to pay their tuition. "The demands and the pressures are high, and if they can't maintain the academic rigor, they end up making poor choices," believes Pitt.

Another issue is that the international student population is in a boom right now in the United States. More often than not, international students' standards are very different when it comes to plagiarism and other kinds of violations. So there's an effort to educate them on the American standards that need to be met, but that also takes time to produce noticeable results.

Affordability Is Also an Issue That Can Lead Students to Violate Tests

Dr. Brett Christie is the Director of Quality Learning & Teaching at California State University (CSU), Academic Technology Services. Although he agrees that technology and international students are in part responsible for the growing numbers of academic violations all over America, there's another side to that coin.

"Another cause I would mention is affordability, which is a huge issue for students," says Christie. "We know that the majority of students report not buying at least one required textbook each semester, due to the cost of it. That's because they have to make critical decisions based on their livelihood.»

"It gets to a point where they have to balance it out: how well are they going to eat versus the number of textbooks they're going to purchase. And that's a big reality in our system," Christie alerts. Naturally, some students might try to cheat on tests so they can go on with the course and still keep their stomachs full.

At Cal State, offering affordable solutions to get the content they need is part of their









Number of academic violations

Total increase since 2011

Average increase per year



Most Popular Violations

Both at Rutgers and Cal State University, plagiarism is considered, by far, the most popular form of academic violation. Cheating and fabrication complete the "greatest hits" list of preferred methods used by students at these schools. There are many types of violations, as listed on Rutgers University's Academic Integrity Policy:

PLAGIARISM - the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit.

CHEATING - the use of inappropriate or prohibited materials. information, sources, or aids in any academic exercise.

FABRICATION - the invention or falsification of sources, citations, data, or results, and recording or reporting them in any academic exercise.

FACILITATION OF DISHONESTY knowingly or negligently allowing one's work to be used by other students without prior approval of the instructor or otherwise aiding others in committing violations of academic integrity.

ACADEMIC SABOTAGE - deliberately impeding the academic progress of others.

VIOLATION OF RESEARCH OR

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS - violations of the code of ethics specific to a particular profession and violations of more generally applicable ethical requirements for the acquisition, analysis, and reporting of research data and the preparation and submission of scholarly work for publication.

VIOLATIONS INVOLVING POTENTIALLY **CRIMINAL ACTIVITY - violations in** this category include theft, fraud, forgery, or distribution of ill-gotten materials committed as part of an act of academic dishonesty.





What they found out, until now, is that universities have to come up with new languages to educate this population.

Rutgers has been trying different trainings, reproducing videos, trying to meet students where they are – be it Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or... their native country. Evidently, Rutgers has visited China, for instance, in order to meet with students before they go to the United States. "Not all universities are doing this, actually flying staff to other countries, to try and educate them on our standards. Of course, we don't just talk about academic integrity, but that's certainly a big part of what we do on those trips," Pitt clarifies.

Rutgers' next move is trying to become more relevant on social media: Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are the main focuses in target advertising to their students on academic integrity.

What to Do When Online Learning Becomes the Preferential Target for Cheaters

With an academic integrity policy that covers online and traditional classes, Rutgers is studying new ways to prevent violations from happening on their virtual education environments. One possibility for the near future, is for students who take online classes to visit one of Rutgers' 3 campuses to write their examinations. "They would have to show their IDs to prove who they are. When the tests happen remotely, it's harder to be certain about who is taking them," says Pitt.

At Cal State, the Quality Assurance in Online Learning program, which was implemented in 2011, was awarded for Outstanding Impact by an Organization, at the Annual Quality Matters Conference, last year. Rutgers' next move is trying to become more relevant on social media: Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are the main focuses in target advertising to their students on academic integrity.

"We started this program in 2011, based on the development of Quality Online Learning and Teaching (QOLT), which was informed by Quality Matters and other existing instruments. By developing these instruments, we've been able to create training courses for faculty and instructional staff, and it helps them most effectively to develop and deliver online courses," Christie explains.

Related to that, Cal State's campuses and instructors have a number of tools to fight academic dishonesty, such as SafeAssign, one of the many tools developed by Blackboard, and which helps students identify how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase. Exam proctoring solutions are also in use at Cal State – amongst their actions are lockdowns on students' computers and testing sessions, identification of areas of possible cheating in recorded videos, and watching test takers via webcam.

Also at Cal State, course design is another alternative to get students more interested in their classes and, as a consequence, less inclined to cheat. "We really try to get the instructor to think about their student learning outcomes. That's what guides the course and the students. So, if the instructor designs the course in a way that's more aligned with the outcomes, writes it more effectively, and shows students how it aligns with different activities and experiences, I think that's a more effective way and guide for students to complete the course and be prepared for the various assessments," Christie believes.

In online learning environments, in particular, instructors have to think of different assessment methods in their course design in order to challenge students, so more personalized responses are found, and therefore more grades based on individual performance can be given, as opposed to answering automated questions that have just one right option. "But with online courses, sometimes people use it as a way to scale the number of students in a course, and the downside of that is using forms of assessments that are more automated and efficient. The more automated they are, sometimes the more problematic areas you're going to have, as far as academic integrity and cheating," observes Christie.

"What Do You Want to Do With Your Life?"

There are no easy answers and solutions to end academic integrity violations. Both Pitt and Christie agree that raising awareness on the issue and focusing on preventing violations from happening is what will get the number of cases down in the years to come. "Keeping close to students and faculty and talking about it is what can make the difference to build a healthier learning environment for everyone," Christie affirms.

Also, making students think about the consequences of their actions, not only on campus, but in the world out there, can be very helpful in these situations. "Here at Rutgers, we try to connect the micro to the macro. We try to show them that their actions have consequences and if they did something similar when working at a top firm, for example, that could lead to serious punishments. We believe in this tie, so they can think about their actions and, hopefully, try to follow a better path in their studies and careers in the future," concludes Pitt.





American Standards of Academic Integrity: An International **Student Perspective**

BY: KYOUNGAH LEE PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES

MY BROTHER GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL IN South Korea and came to the United States to study engineering. In his first English class, he was very excited to receive his first homework assignment, which was to write sentences using a given set of vocabulary words. He confidently looked up the words in an online dictionary and copied the sample sentences he found there, which is, generally, what students do to complete homework in South Korea – students mainly copy and paste the necessary material. However, his teacher wrote "no plagiarism" on his paper, so my brother asked me what "plagiarism" meant, as his plagiarism was not intentional. It was then that he realized that the education system was different here.

Unfortunately, my brother's experience is fairly common among international students. Many new international students, in particular from Asia, are not familiar with what constitutes an infraction of academic integrity. Given that students behave

rationally based on how they have grown up - how they were trained and educated for more than 10 years - international students often are not aware that certain actions have negative effects in American institutions due to cultural differences.¹ As a result, it is possible to see how one's perception of plagiarism can be based on historical and cultural assumptions.²

When international students think about academic integrity, they more likely think about cheating during an exam, but not really about proper citation, helping out classmates, or sharing



Colleges and universities in the United States have increased their efforts to recruit international students, and the number of international students has increased year over year to 1,043,839 in the 2015-2016 academic year. More than 60% of international students come from Asian countries, mostly from China, India, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea.³ The education systems in those countries vary from the American system, and this may cause students to commit unintentional academic misconduct in America by not understanding the negative effects and consequences of their actions.

their answers on an assignment or a take-home exam. Copying someone's homework may not be a big deal in other countries because the role and purpose of homework can be very different, and homework tends not to have a big impact on the final grade. An example of a homework assignment in South Korea would be teachers collecting the students' class notes, including what teachers wrote on the blackboard, and giving full points homework completion. Another example from a history class would be to write about World War II. In such cases, students tend to copy word for word from Wikipedia or blogs. Teachers spend time writing difficult exam questions in order to differentiate students from one another in the class ranking, rather than spend time carefully checking homework content, because class ranking is what really matters for students to get into a good college. Also, teachers do not warn students about copying homework from the internet or from friends, although they know students will do so because "copying" is not a negative concept in South Korea. Students may submit homework without any citations or references, and they get full points for it. Even though some teachers might not like to see everything copied from an online source, the consequences for doing so are minimal. For instance, teachers may just deduct 5 points off a homework assignment. Due to the competitive study environment in other countries, taking time to do homework might be viewed as wasting time that you could have spent studying for the national exams. Students are not taught about proper citation or APA/MLA format throughout K-12; in contrast, citation is a very important concept that is taught early on in America to prevent plagiarism.

> When international students think about academic integrity, they more likely think about cheating during an exam, but not really about proper citation, helping out classmates, or sharing their answers on an assignment or a take-home exam.

Many students in Asian countries are accustomed to a learning style of memorizing concepts and others' work, and reproducing them. For instance, in English class, I used to memorize paragraphs and was asked to reproduce the exact words in the same order as proof that I studied. We were educated to have strong memorization skills. There was a famous AICPA (American Institute of Certified Public Account) exam prep center in South Korea and many students attended those review sections. Many of those students studied hard and took an AICPA exam in English. After a month, investigators from America flew to Korea because they suspected cheating since a large group of students had the same answers in a writing section. In fact, there was no cheating or dishonesty; students just memorized the same sample answers to the same questions and then wrote them down on the exam. This happens in the writing or speaking portion of the English proficiency tests such as TOEIC and TOEFL, as students tend to memorize answers word by word and reproduce them on exams.

Students in other countries may not hesitate to ask another student for class notes and homework assignments. Also, most will not mind sharing them because class notes and homework assignments do not play a big role in determining students' final grade. Students from other countries tend to be more collectivistic than American students. In Korean culture, if anyone refuses to share, he/she may be viewed as mean and treated as a social outcast. Because we have a competitive study environment and class ranking really matters in South Korea, some students may worry that a friend might get a higher grade using his or her notes, since tests are based on what the teacher said in class. In that case, they will not want to share their class notes, but will still be generous to the other students if they could not take notes because of a family emergency or sickness.



This education system has worked well in South Korea to help students learn many subject areas in a short amount of time, and be able to understand concepts well and thoroughly. In fact, this is one of the main factors that has helped transform the country and rapidly grow its economy over the past 60 years. This is not to say that one system is better than the others, but rather, that they are different. International students in America should not be excused just because they are not used to the system, nor should institutions change their policies and expectations-it is the student's responsibility not to violate any academic codes of conduct. Nevertheless, institutes are responsible for educating students properly to support their

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needs, as having international students simply come over is not enough for them to succeed academically and to pursue their academic dream. In order to provide proper training, it is helpful for staff and faculty to understand cultural differences in academia and to know how to communicate expectations and policies effectively to international students.

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Universidad Mayor De Chile: Adopting E-Learning Technology Step by Step

Laura Solís Director of E-Learning Development, Universidad Mayor de Chile Mario Herane Vice-Principal, Development and Administration, Universidad Mayor de Chile For universities worldwide, the quality of education offered to their students is a main priority. This is why, with each new technology that becomes available to simplify learning processes, great opportunities for improvement open up for institutions.

BY: LAURA OROZCO SANTIAGO DE CHILE, CHILE

ADOPTING TECHNOLOGY EFFECTIVELY OFTEN MEANS casting aside traditional, analogue teaching methods, and gradually implementing new tools that offer teaching staff, students and management alike, not only speed, but also greater satisfaction.

However, adopting an e-learning platform can be challenging, even more so if it's being introduced on a mass scale and transversally at a company or educational institution. In this case, a careful and well thought-out adoption process can be the key to success. Universidad Mayor de Chile, a top-ranking private institution, decided to expand the capacity of its virtual learning systems in order to support the development of its online and blended education options. How did the university do it?

"We have been developing e-learning programs for more than ten years, and over the course of time we have evolved. For several years we developed our own platforms, and then we changed to Moodle. But by around 2014, we had achieved a degree of maturity that required a system on the same level, and we began to implement Blackboard Learn, step by step," explained Vice-President, Development and Administration, Mario Herane.





PILOT PROGRAM UP AND RUNNING

The first initiative was to introduce Blackboard Learn as a pilot project, solely for online and blended postgraduate courses. This limited target group meant that the university had greater control, and the results in terms of learning were excellent. While this was going on, undergraduate students and teaching staff continued to use Moodle. and they were given training so that in the near future they would be able to move to new and better virtual learning tools. "More than anything else, the community warmly welcomed the consistency of the platform, and the level of acceptance by academics and students in terms of its usability was very good. Having a single,

comprehensive platform gave us very good results," said Herane.



MASS IMPLEMENTATION

Since March 2017. Blackboard Learn became the institution's sole e-learning platform. In order to guarantee its mass implementation and ensure that it really permeated every undergraduate course at the university, it was first introduced to online and blended programs, and also the virtual assistance classrooms for all face-to-face classes. According to Laura Solis, the university's Director of

E-Learning Development, "the institution's online synchronous class model is one of its strengths. Here, Blackboard Learn's Blackboard Collaborate tool offers us a very important solution, because it not only enables teachers and students to be close to each other, it also allows us to respond quickly to their concerns and provide the feedback that only a session in real time can offer."



CLEAR METHODOLOGIES

The university is currently developing blended and online work methodologies so that information reaches all faculties and teaching staff uniformly. To achieve this, the university receives technical and onsite consulting support from the Blackboard Learn adoption team. "We are developing a training and integration methodology model for academic staff. Additionally, through transverse academic units throughout the university, such as courses in the Administration or Mathematics departments, we are working with teachers on developing blended subjects so that we can make a bigger institutional impact," said Mario.



'BLENDING' EDUCATION

The university has three courses that are wholly online: Risk Prevention, Public Administration, and **Business Management** Engineering. These operate and are developed on Blackboard Learn, but the idea is that they should not be the only ones to use it extensively. "The university is drawing up policies aimed at encouraging all courses to join the blended education model. There is a difference between being blended and simply uploading some material into the virtual classroom. A truly combined methodology is, for example, an inverted classroom, where online interacts with face-to-face," said Solís.



As Universidad Mayor de Chile shows, the success of a technology adoption process depends on various factors, but mostly, it relies on the way it is planned. On the one hand, it is important to follow a step-by-step process, with pilot projects that allow

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EXAMPLES THAT INSPIRE

Finally, the university's e-learning team is exploring all the tools available in Blackboard's toolkit package, in order to boost usage and establish a broader virtual community. One of its best strategies is to create and present sample courses that can demonstrate the online platform's full potential to teachers. "We are also creating online repositories, to inform teachers who still know very little about e-learning technology or who are only just starting to look into how to use it. The idea is that the approach should not just be through training sessions but rather that teachers can see that the university is making use of the platform in an integrated manner," concluded Solís.

for the impact of the initiative to be measured and enable the implementation process to be perfected. On the other hand, it is also vital to count on the support and advice from the companies offering the e-learning platforms, as their knowledge and experience can enable taking full advantage of the tool's potential.

Education for the Working World: How to Develop **Students** Employability Skills Through **Future Facing** Learning

Through a strategic focus on future facing learning, Teesside University, in the United Kingdom, develops students practical skills to enter the workforce. How do they enhance online teaching to create competitive advantages for post-university work life?

BY: MARTHA LUCÍA SEGRERA MIDDLESBROUGH, ENGLAND, UNITED KINGDOM PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE WORKFORCE NOT only includes teaching knowledge about a discipline or occupation, it also involves developing employability skills that allow for adequate interaction within a professional environment, as well as success in the performance of tasks. Failure to teach these skills to students may generate great gaps and limitations in young graduates who aspire to get a job and compete within an increasingly complex world.

For this reason, Teesside University has implemented methodologies to ensure students acquire all the skills and abilities to deliver impact in the workplace. In fact, Teesside University has recently been named as the top higher education institution in the North East of England for graduates securing professional and managerial level employment. Just six months after graduating, 57% of its students secured graduate level jobs.

Professor Mark Simpson is the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching) at Teesside University, and Dr Jonathan Eaton is the Head of Learning and Teaching Enhancement. Together, they have developed and led innovative projects within Teesside University, with a unique focus on future facing learning. They both shared with E-Learn the strategies they have implemented to prepare students for life post-graduation.

Developing an Immersive Learning Environment Embedded in Blackboard Learn

Teesside University is among the institutions that received funding to work on innovative and experimental projects to enhance learning and teaching. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) awarded them, from its Catalyst Fund, with funding for a project

Professor Mark Simpson Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching). Teesside University AFP Scott Heppel



aiming to improve employability outcomes through an immersive learning environment.

The project, *"Enhancing employability outcomes through an immersive learning environment,"* aims to assess the impact on employability skills, based on an experimental approach to online learning, while also engaging employers in the improvement of learning and teaching, and students through co-design and research.

As a result, a tool was developed as part of the project, based on pedagogical principles of experiential learning, in partnership with students and local employers.

Dr Eaton explains that the tool was embedded in Blackboard Learn, which works as a great complement, since it allows absolute interactivity, and recreates a realistic immersive learning experience regarding the employee selection process, using videos from actors, who play characters in particular scenarios.

The tool also enables students to record video responses to interview questions, which they can review, and reflect on their responses. In addition, built-in assessments and feedback within the tool provide opportunities for students to self-evaluate their understanding regarding the employee selection process. Also, key documents are further available to instruct students about the interview process.

Likewise, the tool enables tutors to collect meaningful student analytics, including completion rates for each activity and time spent on particular activities, which are gathered at the program level. Students constantly receive visual feedback on their progress, completion rate and achievement, through all the features available in the tool. The tool is currently being tested with a cohort of students, with the purpose of determining how the use of this immersive environment could improve students development of skills and confidence during the employee selection process. The environment will become available for all students as soon as the tool's impact is determined through a robust evaluation.

Employer engagement

Collaboration between Teesside University and employers enables the design and joint structuring of the qualifications and learning standards that students must meet in order to become competitive employees. Dr Eaton points out that collaboration between the university and employers helps ensure that course contents match industry needs and, as a result, ensuring the skills that are taught to students are current, according to the changing demands of local, national and international labour markets.

According to Professor Mark Simpson, "students are so satisfied with projects such as these ones, because they allow them to be heavily involved in the creation of projects, and, acknowledge that technology is not the most important [thing], but the human interaction; which is clearly important in terms of finding a job." In this regard, students are located the centre of all innovations.

Student Participation in the Process

At Teesside University, they seek to enhance the student experience through the delivery of future facing learning, with aims to synergise teaching and research. For example, there is an extracurricular program called "Students as Researchers," in which students are funded to engage in research projects with academics. It is an opportunity to learn aspects of research processes, helping students develop a number of skills, including teamwork and time management.

Additionally, working closely with students ensures that the curriculum maintains its relevance because it's not done in isolation from the students. The university ensures that students and employers consistently provide feedback on how the curriculum should be structured and how students should complete it.

Practice the Blended Learning Model

As said by Professor Simpson, one should not fall into the mistake of thinking that technology is a magic bullet that solves everything and leaves aside the interaction between people, which is fundamental when it comes to looking for a job. "The blended system that we use is intended to use the best part of technology, but it also allows employers to have face-to-face interaction with students," he explains.

One of Teesside University's projects is the Law Clinic, which has a dual purpose. For one, it provides Law students with real practical experience on the handling of legal cases, while also offering a service to the community in cases where people may otherwise find it difficult to afford legal advice and representation. The University has partnered with several local law firms in order to offer free legal advice services. According to Professor Simpson, the Law Clinic is a safe place, since it is inside the University. There, students begin to interact with potential employers so when they leave university, they feel more confident in their interactions at work, since they have already had experience in the past.

Using a blended learning system ensures that students develop the skills that they will utilise both within their degrees. However, also moving forward, because the focus is not only based on the development of knowledge, but also on providing students with different skillsets, such as investigating and analysing information, teamwork, creativity, time management and problem solving, which will certainly prepare them for the complexity of the workplace.

Lastly, with the intention of integrating the traditional learning environment with

Leading the Future: Teesside 2020

Teesside 2020 is an ambitious strategy to position the University as a leading institution with an international reputation for academic excellence, and for providing students with an outstanding learning experience. It's also about "acknowledging that we put students first, and acknowledge that they are the heart of everything that we do," Professor Simpson notes.

RESEARCH AND

INNOVATION

Develop high

quality research in

various subjects

and interdisciplinary

topics, and integrate

research into teaching

methodology to develop

students' research skills.



STUDENTS AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES Create a learning culture and an innovative curriculum. Collaborate with employers and organisations to develop employability skills that will also positively impact industry and businesses, and create learning spaces with the best technology available.

the digital, Teesside University is planning that by September 2018, all new first year students are to have an iPad. The idea is that it can be taken to the classroom and students can access interactive resources online, initiate discussions, or manipulate data, using preloaded applications.

Both experts express that they are "very excited" about what Teesside University has to offer in the future, as they have the opportunity to continue innovating and implementing strategies that, in addition to integrating technology with education, prepare graduates to thrive in an increasingly complex world.

Key Advice for Implementing **Immersive Learning Environments**

Creating immersive learning environments should involve the entire institution and its stakeholders: this means that they are not limited to the academic component. Collaborative development should also include Educational Developers, Learning Technologists and Careers Advisors to ensure that the final product supports students to deliver impact within the contemporary and future workplace.

Working closely with students and employers: it is very useful to build a network to structure programs, content and other elements necessary for the development of employability skills, which ensures that university and industry needs are both met.



This mission aims to enrich education through research and innovation through the engagement of companies and professionals, to transform lives and economies.

Teesside 2020 includes the following objectives, vision and plans, which the University seeks to carry out in the next few years:



ENTERPRISE AND BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT Create a network of companies and academic associations to increase student employment rates upon graduation.



INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY Increase the number of international students on campus to have a culturally diverse learning community, and increase transnational education opportunities to support the exchange of students and University staff.



Internationality, Industry Linkage, Innovation and Integrity: The Four I's Program

As technology evolves and smartphones have more power today than any supercomputer did 30 years ago, important shifts in society take place. For developing economies like Thailand's, technology is a wonderful resource.

BY: CHRISTINA GÓMEZ ECHAVARRÍA BANGKOK, THAILAND MANY WORKING ADULTS WHO WERE NOT ABLE TO RECEIVE A PROPER education due to family responsibilities, or education simply not being an option for them, now have the opportunity to access education to obtain better opportunities for themselves, without having to compromise on current job security or family well-being.

In less than a generation, Thailand has moved from being a largely agrarian low-income society, to an upper middle-income nation and a key contributor to the economic growth of the Southeast Asia region. Education has played a very important role in this transformation. Since 1999, the government has made several reforms to its educational system to improve the quality of their teaching professionals, as well as to implement different curriculums and assessment systems to improve student's attainment of skills and knowledge. Basic education has been free of charge since 2009, and only up to a few years back, the government has also recognized the importance of Information and Communication Technology in the exchange of knowledge worldwide. Thus, they have made ICT competencies a major component of the education curriculum.¹

Thailand's government is keen on delivering personalized education for all citizens, as well as teaching about the importance of lifelong learning. (See statistics graphics)

Stamford International University has decided to seize this opportunity and deliver educational options for everyone in the country. Stamford has around 4,200 students learning how to use technology as an educational tool, and it has the goal of teaching students theory, as well as practical knowledge that will be invaluable to them long after they graduate.

Apitep Saekow, President of Academic Services at Stamford International University, says that e-learning in Thailand has increased in the last five years, but that it still has a long way to go if we compare it with countries like the United States. However, the perception of e-learning has improved greatly, even though there are many who still think the face-to-face approach is better. Apitep explains that at Stamford, they want to give students the best of both worlds, so they have embraced the blended learning approach.



THAILAND POPULATION STATISTICS

- Thailand's total population.
- Population with internet access.





 Population that lives in urban areas and this number is expected to grow dramatically.



SOURCES

1. Reviews of National Policies for Education. Education in Thailand. An OECD-UNESCO Perspective. Secretary-General of the OECD and UNESCO. 2016. OECD Publishing, Paris.



Stamford has the following objectives: to give its students the very best education, an alternative educational option to what is currently offered in Thailand, and to understand their needs. For this, they came up with the Four I's.

- **Internationality:** Stamford has the word international in its name. This is because they understand that Thailand is a country with international influence, abundant international tourism, and that overall, the Thai people always appreciate an international component in their daily lives. Thus, it is important for the university to give its students a taste of what it means to be international and to interact with different cultures so they may succeed in any part of the world by becoming global professionals. The university currently has students from 110 countries around the world, and 70% of the teaching staff comes from abroad. As a result, Thai students are constantly interacting with peers and staff from different cultures. Additionally, Stamford has partnered with universities around the world for students to do foreign exchange programs and have the option of graduating with double degrees. This is thanks to Stamford being part of the Laureate International Universities Network, the largest education network in the world, serving more than 1 million students around the world, and over 70 partner universities in 25 different countries.
- Industry Linkage: All Stamford International programs are designed along with CEOs, managers, and other high profile industry players, so that students come out with the skills set these industries look for when hiring, and have an employability edge. Additionally, they have important guest speakers allowing students to project themselves onto their future-to see what is possible and to understand the work and knowledge needed to reach a similar position in the future.
- 3. Innovation: the university aims at using the very best in technology and tools to achieve student engagement. Stamford International uses Blackboard Learn and Blackboard Collaborate to offer students flexibility in their learning. Apitep explains that since most adult learners are employed, they must commute to work, while others live in rural areas of the country. With Blackboard Collaborate, they can join classes from anywhere, spend time with their teachers and peers and are able to participate easily-all without having to compromise other aspects of their lives. The university embraces both synchronous and

asynchronous learning environments, each with its advantages. Synchronous learning is used via Blackboard Collaborate 30% of the time, and the remainder is asynchronous learning. In short, technology and innovation grant easy access to education, enabling all types of students to login from anywhere in the world.

Integrity: Stamford International believes that a successful professional needs to have integrity. Since they aim to train entrepreneurs, they have made it their mission to teach students about morals and ethics and how to effectively negotiate and compromise. In Apitep's words, a person "who takes, takes and takes, cannot be a successful professional." They need to know when to give back, when to work with and for the community, and when to think of the social component that surrounds them, in order to become successful.

Stamford International University won the Blackboard Catalyst Award in 2014, and



Apitep explains they received the award thanks to the way they utilize and implement Blackboard to improve flexibility and accessibility, along with high quality teaching and learning methods for working adults. Apitep explains that every class has a very well-defined learning outcome, with a different discussion and topic. Their three most popular programs are: International Business Management, MBA and International Hotel Management.

Even though 70% of Stamford students are young adults completing their undergraduate degrees, nearly 30% of working adults are also students that have been given the chance to rethink their lives, to grow, to learn and to become lifelong learners.



Thailand is a great example of how much technology has done and can do for education, and how it has given everyone in the country equal opportunities-despite growing up in rice fields, or in the city-the ability to acquire a quality education and aspire to do more. Thailand is setting an example for third world economies all around the world, and governments could look to them as an example and replicate it-because an educated population makes a civilized and strong country.

How Education Can Continue When Nature Strikes

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi known as the "Island University" is located in South Texas near the Gulf of Mexico. It is home for 12,202 students who receive a quality education while enjoying whitesand beaches. Most of the calendar year is filled with sunshine days, but the University is well prepared for any crisis that may develop.

BY: DANA STEWART

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS, UNITED STATES

EDWARD J. EVANS SERVES AS ASSOCIATE VICE President for Information Technology & Chief Information Officer for Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. Evans is charged with ensuring students, faculty and staff have access to technology during regular operations and during and after an emergency. The university uses a wide array of technology services to inform and facilitate communication within its campus. Blackboard Learn, Blackboard Connect and Blackboard Intelligence Suite played a critical role in communicating and engaging with the campus during Hurricane Harvey.

Evans spoke to E-Learn about his experience with Hurricane Harvey and the important role Blackboard played in the safety of its population.

Natural disasters and other disruptive events challenge universities to stay connected and engage faculty and students during a crisis. Safety is paramount. For higher leaning institutions, the next challenge is to create a continuity of education plan that facilitates an environment that can meet student and faculty needs during and after a crisis.

For schools on the gulf coast, hurricane season is as routine as the fall semester. Students go about their day to day unaware that the university has integrated components of their normal activities into an emergency response and recovery plan.

Blackboard Connect and Blackboard Learn plays an important role in the continuity of education plan at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

"People find comfort with plans and being prepared," says Evans.

The Corpus Christi campus sits on an island off the Gulf Coast and has been designated a StormReady





Edward J. Evans Associate Vice President for Information Technology & Chief Information Officer at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi



campus by the National Weather Service. This recognition acknowledges the university's focus on communication, mitigation and community readiness in its emergency preparedness plans.

An adaptable emergency response allowed the university to activate parts of its plan during Hurricane Harvey which hit the Gulf Coast in August.

Continuity of education is life-saving according to a UN/Unicef Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) report, Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans For Institutions of Higher Education. INEE is global network of practitioners and policy makers working to ensure all persons receive quality education and a safe learning environment in emergencies and post-crisis recovery. Members of INEE include USAID, UNICEF, World Vision and other organization across the globe.

INEE created 4 foundation standards to guide education leaders in disaster preparedness, response and recover planning: Access and Learning Environment, Teaching and Learning, Teachers and other Personnel, and Education Policy.

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Access and Learning Environment

A continuity plan creates a safe and secure environment that promotes the physical and mental health of all learners, teachers and educational personnel. Out of this environment, a network of access to critically needed health, nutrition, mental and protection services is provided.

Teaching and Learning

Appropriate training provides faculty with the knowledge to create a curriculum that is learner-centered, participator, inclusive and utilizes the appropriate evaluation methods.

Teachers and Other Personnel

The educational institution provides the appropriate compensation to personnel for the conditions of the work and provides adequate support. Education centers openly and transparently recruit and train faculty and staff.

Education Policy

Education authorities implement policies that prioritizes continuity and recovery. It takes into account international and national standards, policies, laws and the learning needs of the affected population.

In the United States, a 2011 President Policy Directive guides the U.S. Department of Education's (DOE) national preparedness efforts and focuses around five core mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery.

- Prevention. Universities must implement preventive measures to keep threatening or actual incidents from occurring.
- **Protection.** Ongoing actions on campus protect people and property from a threat or hazard.
- Mitigation. Plans are implemented to reduce the likelihood of a threat and the education center works to ensure they maintain capabilities to eliminate or reduce the loss of life and property damage.
- **Response.** During a crisis or threat, a safe and secure environment is established to save lives and facilitate the transition to recovery.

 Recovery. Universities work with those affected and provide the ability to restore the learning environment.

The safety of students and personnel is the underlining mission of both the INEE and DOE in each area of focus.

From the start of the emergency and through the recovery, access to education creates a safe and consistent environment for student and education leaders. A natural network of support and a line of communication evolves through continuity of education initiatives.

When Hurricane Harvey was racing toward the Corpus Christi campus, university officials delayed the start of school by one week. "Those of us along the gulf coast take it very seriously." said

"Blackboard Intelligence Suite is used to monitor student activities including logging into Blackboard Learn, making student payments or student withdrawals."

Evans. The university's commitment to students and staff is outlined in their academic continuity document. Described as a critical element to minimize the effects of a disaster, the academic continuity plan is purposely fluid to mitigate any risk for students and faculty during an emergency.

A key component of that fluidity is the use of Blackboard Learn by students and faculty during normal school operations. Faculty receive clear instructions on how to transition from normal classroom operations to continuing education operations if the campus is closed. They begin by introducing Blackboard Learn into the classroom the first day. The university encourages faculty to have the syllabus, grade book and other critical information already in the system and through Blackboard Learn, every faculty member creates a course shell for each course.



During a disaster, "The goal is not a major redesign. Hopefully the flow of things move to online," said Evans.

During any crisis the university's access to student records is critical. "As soon as the university came back from Harvey we were running reports to see where students were located and how many were effected by Harvey. Understanding the likelihood that people were coming from affected areas and that helped to inform our response and make decisions."

Blackboard Intelligence Suite provides the university with a means to track students interacting in



By using Blackboard Learn students have the same opportunity as if sitting in the classroom. Faculty receive detailed instruction on how to have their online classroom in place before an evacuation, said Evans.

The Office of Distance Education and Learning Technologies website houses the Blackboard login and the continuity of learning links for students and faculty. The website walks students and faculty through steps on how to prepare for academic continuity during an emergency.

The university's commitment to its students is illustrated in its efforts to educate and support faculty using online education. "We offer a certificate in best practices for online course design that is taught by our Office of Distance Education and Learning Technologies so faculty can learn best practices for putting their courses together."

While Blackboard serves as the university's main tool in continuity of education, it also fulfills the critical role of the emergency alert system through Blackboard Connect. "We keep the systems confirmed at all times," said Evans.

The university collects the cell numbers of students and corresponding information from employees. That information is housed in Blackboard Connect and updated weekly. The consistency and technology provided by Blackboard creates an environment for academia to adopt, adapt and continue during a crisis.



classes. More importantly, it creates an opportunity for the university to identify students at risk.

Many of the university's students live in Southeast Texas which was impacted by the hurricane. Using Blackboard Intelligence Suite generated reports, the university was able to identify the geographical home of all its students. This intelligence provided the administrations with critical information in deciding when to reopen the university.

"How does this factor in the grand scheme of things? I don't think we are doing things too differently than what students expect. Students are already familiar with using mobile devices and a variety of applications for interacting with friends, family, classes and in some cases work. This is part of the larger ecosystem that students are accustomed working on."

Questions of operational success and potential adjustments are raised as the university returns to normal operations. "Many people in IT are early responders- early reentrants into the university to help get things ready for the university. We had to be ready to engage faculty and staff and get their office computers set up. I am re-evaluating who I need back," said Evans.

The engagement by faculty and staff is examined through Blackboard Intelligence Suite reports. Students remain forefront in the mind of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi leaders. If students are dropping hours, then the university wants to determined if a response to that situation is needed. Reflecting on the last few weeks after Harvey, Evans commented, "We need to get past the storm and give students time. A lot of our students are coming from flooded areas."

After an emergency situation the continuity of education evolves as the university returns to normal operations. Blackboard Intelligence Suite is used to monitor student activities including logging into Blackboard Learn, making student payments or student withdrawals. Through crisis and in everyday situations, Blackboard Intelligence Suite allows the university to understand more about its student population. It provides the university with a big picture view of the student body and core details to highlight any changes in the student population. This knowledge provides administrative officials with the opportunity to implement or change current plans to meet students' needs while achieving the university's core mission. Administrators are able to understand more about a student based on their activities and can contact relevant departments to see how they can keep the student engaged.

Evans is particularly proud of the university's decision to open a call center for students for the first time in response to Hurricane Harvey. This provided students with one number to call to find out answers to any questions. Now that classes have started and the number of calls has decreased significantly, students are being redirected to the appropriate offices for assistance.

Continuity of education depends on power to run the devices. Being certified a StormReady campus means contracts are already in place if the university generator goes dark.



For further security, Blackboard Learn and other core services are hosted off campus.

Technology plays a critical role in implementing a continuity of education plan for students, faculty and the administration. The most important applications must be identified from a long list of university provided services.

When asked the core pieces of software needed in an emergency and to implement an academic continuity plan, Evans didn't hesitate. "If I am picking out the things that we use from Blackboard off the top of my head, obviously Blackboard Learn and Blackboard Connect have been huge inside our emergency response plan and disaster response plan."

"We have to have Blackboard Learn available." In order for this to happen the university must ensure that other systems are working. "Our day to day activities won't work if these are not in place." Timely information and communication help students and faculty stay connected and provides a means for the university to continue its core mission.

"On the other side, we need to be sensitive to whether in the midst of the disaster that you have good data service. I had a number of coworkers who stayed in town to weather the storm. They were lucky to get text messages."

During their planning exercises, university leaders asked what is our lowest barrier we want or do we need multiple ways to communicate with people. During an event different mobile communication options may work with different people in the thick of it, according to Evans. "Utilities realize those services need to recover rather quickly, but we still need to be sensitive."



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