

Plagiarism

continued from page 1

Plagiarism is the biggest area of increase among the different types of academic dishonesty, said Chris Loschiavo, University director of student judicial affairs.

"You know that it's a big problem when www.plagiarism.com exists," he said.

The Web site is a tool for professors to determine what percentage of a paper has plagiarized content. It employs powerful search engines to review the many Internet sources from which a student may take information.

"It appears with the advent of the Internet we are in a bull market for plagiarism," said Barbara S. Glatt, an executive at plagiarism.com.

Traditional plagiarism is still a problem, too. Students report plagiarizing because they found a source that precisely expressed their point.

"I have plagiarized because I was really stuck for an idea, and right before me was the perfect thing to say," said Jenny, a sophomore history major. "I was successful; the teacher didn't even notice."

The English and composition departments are especially vigilant in efforts to stop plagiarism, Gage said.

"Students ought to learn how to use sources and that if they do plagiarize, the institution cares and will take it seriously," he said.

Cheating affects all students and faculty

"Academic dishonesty is something that the University takes very, very seriously," said Glen Banfield, a student defender with the office of student advocacy who has worked with many academic dishonesty cases.

The University has explicit policies for dealing with plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Punishments range from community service to expulsion, in rare cases.

Cheating is not a victimless crime. Cheaters, honest students and the University as a whole are harmed by acts of academic dishonesty, experts say.

Some students think that academic dishonesty is not hurting others, that it's just helping themselves. "That's not right. Dishonesty has a corrosive effect on atmospheres of trust and respect in the classroom," said Tom Dyke, University vice provost for research.

Students who choose to cheat miss out on important lessons. "Most lessons in personal integrity are learned indirectly," Gage said.

The choice not to cheat when given the opportunity is one such lesson.

"It's the responsibility of the institution to help students learn that lesson through its policies," he said.

Cheaters may face more tangible consequences as well. A student caught cheating will have a difficult time getting into graduate programs and law schools, Banfield said.

Students who are not cheating get hurt by cheaters, Loschiavo said.

A student who graduates by cheating their way through school may not be able to perform in the job market. This reflects poorly on the University and employers may be less likely to hire another University graduate in the future, he said.

Honesty is important outside of the classroom, Dyke said. "Research in all fields really depends on mutual respect and trust."

Research is usually done as a team. If part of that team is dishonest, it can have dramatic results on the team, he said.

Falsifying results in research can have real economic costs. Other researchers may waste time and money conducting experiments or studies based on previously conducted, inaccurate research.

There have been very few problems with dishonesty in research at the University, Dyke said.

Riley Valentine's Day Dance

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Security

continued from page 1

"One of the areas in computer science that we focus on is cryptography, which deals with security issues," she said. "And we're also offering a minor in computer information technology, which deals mainly with security issues in networks in businesses."

National computer security concerns will only increase, especially with the shortage of skilled information security workers, Clinton said in a Jan. 7 speech.

"We need to do more to bring

people into the field of computer security," Clinton said. "That's why I am proposing a new program that will offer college scholarships to students in the field of computer security in exchange for their public service afterward."

The Clinton Administration has expressed concern about the threat of foreign "cyber terrorism," where countries using computers as weapons gain top-secret information or disable computer-based programs vital to national defense.

If the proposal is passed by Congress in the 2001 budget, the first students to receive the scholarships would likely be from one of

seven universities recognized last year by the National Security Agency (NSA) as being "Centers for Excellence in Information Assurance Education."

Of those seven, only one school is on the West Coast — the University of California, Davis. Each of these schools offers specialized degree programs in information security.

The schools worked closely with the NSA to develop curriculum and expand programs, said Allan Berg, director of JMU's information security program. The scholarship proposal highlights the shortage of skilled information technology and security workers, Berg said.

Take a Duck to Lunch 2000

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