

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

***Communication Essentials for College* by Jen Booth, Emily Cramer & Amanda Quibell**

- 1.1 – Why on earth am I taking another English course?
- 1.2 – Connect With Your Instructor
- 1.3 – Acting Professional in an Online Environment
- 1.4 – Academic Integrity

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Please visit the web version of *Communication Essentials for College*
(<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/gccomm/>) to access the complete book,
interactive activities and ancillary resources.

1.1 - WHY ON EARTH AM I TAKING ANOTHER ENGLISH COURSE?

Learning Objectives

- Distinguish between the nature of English and Communications courses
- Explain the importance of studying Communications
- Identify communication-related skills and personal qualities favoured by employers
- Consider how communication skills will ensure your future professional success
- Recognize that the quality of your communication represents the quality of your company

Communications vs. English Courses

Whether students enter their first-year college Communications courses right out of high school or with years of work experience behind them, they often fear being doomed to repeat their high school English class, reading Shakespeare and analyzing confusing poetry. Welcome relief comes when they discover that a course in Communications has nothing to do with either of those things. If not High School English 2.0, what is Communications all about, then?

For our purposes, Communications (yes, with a capital C and ending with an s) is essentially the practice of interacting with others in the academic world, the workplace and other professional contexts. While you are a college student, you will need to interact with scholarly sources and express your learning and ideas at an appropriate post-secondary level. When you embark on your career, absolutely every job—from A to Z, accountant to Zamboni mechanic—involves dealing with a variety of people all day long.

When dealing with various audiences, we adjust the way we communicate according to well-known conventions. You wouldn't talk to a professor or client the same way you would a long-time friendly co-worker. If we communicate effectively—that is, clearly, concisely, coherently, correctly, and convincingly—by following those conventions, we can do a better job of applying our core technical skills, whether they be in sales, the skilled trades, the service industry, health care, the arts, and so on.

This isn't to say that your high school English classes were useless; arguably the movement away from English fundamentals (grammar, punctuation, spelling, style, mechanics, etc.) in Canadian high schools does a disservice to students when they get into their careers. There they soon realize that stakeholders—customers, managers, co-workers, etc.—tend to judge the quality of a person's general competence by the quality of their writing (if that's all they have to go on) and speaking. The topic of Communications, then, includes aspects of the traditional English class curriculum, at least in terms of the basics of English writing and critical thought. But the emphasis always returns to what is practical and necessary for succeeding in the modern workplace—wherever that is—not simply what is “good for you” in the abstract just because someone says it is.

If you feel that you are a weak writer but an excellent speaker or vice versa, rest assured that weaknesses and strengths in different areas of the communication spectrum don't necessarily mean that you will always be good or bad at communication in general. Weaknesses can and should be improved upon, strengths built upon. It's important to recognize that we have more communication channels available to us than ever before, which means that the communication spectrum—from oral to written to nonverbal channels—is broader than ever. Competence across that spectrum is no longer just a “nice to have” asset sought by employers, but essential to career success.

Exercise 1



List your communication strengths and weaknesses. Next, explain what you hope to get out of this Communications course now that you know a little more about what it involves. Before you answer, however, read ahead through the rest of this chapter to get a further sense of why this course is so vital to your career success.

Communication Skills Desired by Employers

If there's a shorthand reason for why you need communication skills to complement your technical skills, it's that you don't get paid without them. You need communication and "soft" skills to get work and keep working so that people continue to want to employ you to apply your core technical skills. A diverse skill set that includes communication is really the key to survival in the modern workforce, and hiring trends bear this out.

In its Employability Skills, the Conference Board of Canada lists "the skills you need to enter, stay in, and progress" in the 21st century workplace. The first category listed is communication skills, specifically how to:

- Read and understand information presented in a variety of forms (e.g., words, graphs, charts, diagrams)
- Write and speak so others pay attention and understand
- Listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others
- Share information using a range of information and communications technologies (e.g., voice, e-mail, computers)
- Use relevant scientific, technological, and mathematical knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas (Conference Board, n.d., para. 2)

In other words, the quality of your communication skills in dealing with the various audiences that surround you in your workplace are the best predictors of professional success.

Exercise 2

1. Go to the Government of Canada's Job Bank site and find your chosen profession (i.e., the job your program will lead to) via the Explore Careers by Essential Skills [New tab] (<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/essentialskills>) page. List the particular document types you will be responsible for communicating with in a professional capacity by reading closely through the Reading, Document Use, and Writing drop-downs. List the in-person responsibilities and communication technologies featured under the Oral Communication drop-down..
2. The Conference Board of Canada's Employability Skills Toolkit (access for Georgian students provided via the Library) lists 5 fundamental communication skills. Create a checklist document for these essential skills (listed below). Add to it some of the other personal

qualities listed in the section above. For each skill or quality, write the best example you can think of demonstrating it in your current or past employment experience, academic program of study, or personal life. **Conference Board of Canada's Fundamental Communication Skills:**

Skills:

- a. Read and understand information presented in different ways (e.g., words, graphs, charts, diagrams).
- b. Write and speak so others can pay attention and understand.
- c. Listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others.
- d. Share information using different technologies (e.g., phone calls, e-mail, social media, the Internet).
- e. Use relevant knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas.

(Conference Board of Canada, 2022, p. 3)

A Diverse Skillset Featuring Communications Is Key to Survival

The picture painted by this insight into what employers are looking for tells us plenty about what we must do about our skillset to have a fighting chance in the fierce competition for jobs: diversify it and keep our communication skills at a high level. Gone are the days when someone would do one or two jobs throughout their entire career. Rather, if the current job-hopping trend continues, “Canadians can expect to hold roughly 15 jobs in their careers” (Harris, 2014, para. 8) and the future for many will involve gigging for several employers at once rather than for one (Mahdawi, 2017).

Futurists tell us that the “gig economy” will evolve alongside advances in AI (artificial intelligence) and automation that will phase out jobs of a routine and mechanical nature with machines. On the bright side, jobs that require advanced communication skills will still be safe for humans because AI and robotics can't so easily imitate them in a way that meets human needs. Taxi drivers, for instance, are a threatened species now with Uber encroaching on their territory and will certainly go extinct when the promised driverless car revolution arrives in the next 10-15 years, along with truckers, bus drivers, and dozens of other auto- and transport-industry roles (Frey, 2016). They can resist, but the market will ultimately force them into retraining and finding work that is hopefully more future-proof—work that prioritizes the human element.

Since the future of work is a series of careers and juggling several gigs at once, communication skills are key to transitioning between them all. The gears of every career switch and new job added are greased by the soft skills that help convince your new employers and clients to hire you, or, if you strike out on your own, convince your new partners and employees to work with or for you. Career changes certainly aren't the signs of catastrophe that they perhaps used to be; usually they mark moves up the pay scale so that you end your working life where you should: far beyond where you started in terms of both your role and pay bracket.

You simply cannot make those career and gig transitions without communication skills. In other words, you will be stuck on the first floor of entry-level gigging unless you have the soft skills to lift you up and shop you around. A nurse who graduates with a diploma and enters the workforce quilting together a patchwork of part-time gigs in hospitals, care homes, clinics, and schools, for instance, won't still be exhausted by this juggling act if they have the soft skills to rise to decision-making positions in any one of those places. Though the job will be technologically assisted in ways that it never had been before with machines handling the menial dirty work, the fundamental human need for human interaction and decision-making will keep that nurse employed and upwardly mobile. The more advanced your communication skills develop as you find your way through the gig economy, the further up the pay scale you'll climb.

Exercise 3

1. Again using the Government of Canada's Job Bank site, go to the Explore Job Prospects [New tab] (<https://www.jobbank.gc.ca/trend-analysis/search-job-outlooks>) page and search for your chosen profession (i.e., the job your program will lead to). Using the sources listed below as well as other internet research, explain whether near- and long-term projections predict that your job will survive the automation and AI revolution or disruption in the workforce. If the role you're training for will be redefined rather than eliminated, describe what new skill sets will "future proof" it.
2. Plot out a career path starting with your chosen profession and where it might take you. Consider that you can rise to supervisory or managerial positions within the profession you're training for, but then transfer into related industries. Name those related industries

and consider how they too will survive the automation/AI disruption.

Communication Represents You and Your Employer

Imagine a situation where you are looking for a contractor for a custom job you need done on your car and you email several companies for a quote breaking down how much the job will cost. You narrow it down to two companies who have about the same price, and one gets back to you within 24 hours with a clear price breakdown in a PDF attached in an email that is friendly in tone and perfectly written. But the other took four days to respond with an email that looked like it was written by a sixth-grader with multiple grammar errors in each sentence and an attached quote that was just a scan of some nearly illegible chicken-scratch writing. Comparing the communication styles of the two companies, choosing who you're going to go with for your custom job is a no-brainer.

Of course, the connection between the quality of their communication and the quality of the job they'll do for you isn't water-tight, but it's a fairly good conclusion to jump to, one that customers will always make. The company representative who took the time to ensure their writing was clear and professional, even proofreading it to confirm that it was error-free, will probably take the time to ensure the job they do for you will be the same high-calibre work that you're paying for. By the same token, we can assume that the one who didn't bother to proofread their email at all will likewise do a quick, sloppy, and disappointing job that will require you to hound them to come back and do it right—a hassle you have no time for. We are all picky, judgmental consumers for obvious reasons: we are careful with our money and expect only the best work value for our dollar.

Good managers know that about their customers, so they hire and retain employees with the same scruples, which means they appreciate more than anyone that your writing represents you and your company. As tech CEO Kyle Wiens (2012) says, "Good grammar is credibility, especially on the internet" (para. 6) where your writing is "a projection of you in your physical absence" (para. 6). Just as people judge flaws in your personal appearance such as a stain on your shirt or broccoli between your teeth, suggesting a sloppy lack of self-awareness and personal care, so they will judge you as a

person if it's obvious from your writing that "you can't tell the difference between their, there, and they're" (para. 6).

As the marketing slogan goes, you don't get a second chance to make a first impression. If potential employers or clients (who are, essentially, your employers) see that you care enough about details to write a flawless email, they will jump to the conclusion that you will be as conscientious in your job and are thus a safe bet for hire. Again, it's no guarantee of future success, but it increases your chances immeasurably. As Wiens (2012) says of the job of coding in the business of software programming, "details are everything. I hire people who care about those details" (paras. 12-13), but you could substitute "programmer" with any job title and it would be just as true.

Exercise 4

Describe an incident when you were disappointed with the professionalism of a business you dealt with, either because of shoddy work, poor customer service, shabby online or in-person appearance, etc. Explain how the quality of their communication impacted that experience and what you would have done differently if you were in their position.

Key Takeaways

- By teaching you the communications conventions for dealing with a variety of stakeholders, a course in Communications has different goals from your high school English course and is a vitally important step towards professionalizing you for entry or re-entry into the workforce.
- Employers value employees who excel in communication skills rather than just technical skills because, by ensuring better workplace and client relations, they contribute directly to the viability of the organization.
- The quality of your communication represents the quality of your work and the organization

you work for, especially online when others have only your words to judge.

Attributions & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is adapted from “Why Communications? (https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/communicationatwork/chapter/1-1-why-communications/)” In *Communication at Work* by Jordan Smith, licensed under CC BY 4.0. / Adaptations include corrections & updates to APA style, updating references/links, and selection of some content for removal, removal of references not used.

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1.2 - CONNECT WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Learning Objective

- Identify ways to build a good relationship with your course instructors through in-class, email, and office hour communication.

A key to your success at college is knowing your instructors and what they identify as important in each of your courses. Developing good relationships with instructors involves good communication in and outside of class times. They are available to meet, communicate, and talk with you, but you must plan how to connect with them during their available times. It is part of an instructor's job to talk to learners outside class, and most successful learners take advantage of that option. It is your right to visit instructors during office hours and discuss any problems or concerns that you have in their course.

In-Class Communication

To build your relationship with your instructor in-class, consider ways that you can show your interest in the course material. Some ways to do this are:

- Listen actively during class to determine what is most important to the instructor.
- Avoid arguing with the instructor. If you disagree with something said in class, try to ask questions about the topic after class.
- Read the textbook before class and prepare questions to ask.
- Let your instructor know what interests you about the course.

Communicating in Office Hours

Instructors hold office hours outside of class. Whenever possible, try to meet your instructor during these times. You can use office hours to ask questions about the course material, to get clarification about the requirements for an assignment, or to learn more about a topic from the class that you find particularly interesting. Some tips for using office hours effectively:

- Arrive on time to be respectful of your instructor’s and other students’ time.
- Come prepared by bringing your textbook and other course materials.
- Prepare questions ahead of time.
- Summarize key points to make sure you understand.

Communicating By Email

Instructors often receive many e-mails from students. To write an effective e-mail, consider the following:

- Use your university e-mail account when possible.
- In the subject line, write the course name and topic of your email (e.g. *BIOL 1100 Lab Report 2*).
- Use a professional greeting in the e-mail (“Dear” rather than “Hey!”).
- Write your question or concern in short, clear sentences.
- End your e-mail with an appropriate conclusion (e.g. “Thank you in advance for your help”, or “Thank you for your time and consideration”).
- Allow time for your instructor to respond – don’t expect an instant reply.

From: Student@email.kpu.ca
 To: Instructor@kpu.ca
 Subject: English 1100 Research Proposal

Hello Professor,
 This is John Smith from your English 1100, Section 10, and I have a question regarding our research proposal assignment that is due on October 6. How many sources are we required to include in our proposal?

Thank you in advance for your help.

Best regards,
 John Smith

Example Email from instructor to student. Sent from a student email account. Use a specific subject line, polite tone and note your class and section. “Connect with your Instructor” licensed under CC BY-SA

By showing an interest, taking time to communicate with your instructor throughout the course, and using e-mail effectively, you will be well on your way to building a good relationship that will support your communication and learning. ¹

Try It!

If you have already reviewed your course presentation, you will know when and where you can contact your instructor during office hours. Plan to drop by your instructor's office hours this week. If you don't yet have a question to ask, consider having a brief conversation with your instructor about one of the following topics:

1. What is one thing I can do to / be successful in this course?
2. How do the concepts I will learn in this class connect with other courses I will take in the future?
3. What can I do to improve my class participation/ writing/ presentation skills?
4. What interests you most about your field?

Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter is adapted from "Connect with your Instructor" (<https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/studystrategizesucceed/chapter/connect-with-your-instructor/>) In *University 101: Study, Strategize and Succeed* by Megan Robertson, Kwantlen Polytechnic University Learning Centres licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0. (<https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/studystrategizesucceed/chapter/connect-with-your-instructor/>) / Adaptations include small edits to improve student-friendly language, and formatting. Accessibility updates also included.

Notes

1. Study Guides and Strategies. (n.d.). *Influencing teachers and improving classroom communication skills*. Retrieved from <http://www.studygs.net/attmot2.htm> ↵

1.3 - ACTING PROFESSIONALLY IN AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

Learning Objective

- Identify fundamental behaviours to establish professionalism in an online learning environment.

Faculty expect as much from you in an online space as they do in a face-to-face environment. Professional behaviour is necessary for the long-term success of an online student. The basis of this chapter will be learning the fundamental behaviours in an online environment. Moreover, you'll learn how to exhibit respect in your online lectures, and maintain academic integrity. Following this chapter, you will be confident, prepared, and excited about your online journey.

Online Professionalism

Professionalism during in-person interactions must be equally represented in the online environment. Professional online behaviour includes using the proper tools (i.e. headphones, microphones, camera) to interact with others. This can also include ensuring that you use the "raise your hand" feature and allowing the professor to call on you before speaking. It is common courtesy when in your online lectures to mute yourself until it is your turn to speak.

Online Discussion Boards

In an online environment, discussion boards or chat rooms are a common form of

communication between yourself and your peers. We often don't realize how important it is to maintain a professional relationship with our peers in our online interactions. As we move towards online school, being professional and establishing a social contract helps build a finer community for online learners.

Importance of Communication Skills

Communication skills play a vital role in an online environment. The most efficient way of communicating with your professors and Teaching Assistants/Graduate Assistants (TA/GA) is by email. Some tips which can help you build a formal relationship include:

- Using an appropriate subject line to summarize your email
- Using the proper salutation when addressing your professors
- Briefly explain your question/inquiry in the body paragraphs
- Include a proper closing statement (Regards, Sincerely, etc.)

Academic Integrity

One of the biggest concerns in the online environment is academic integrity. Academic integrity is the commitment to honesty while exemplifying moral behaviour in your studies. Universities have a very strict policy regarding plagiarism and failure to obey these policies could result in expulsion from your institution. If you ever find yourself unsure, reach out to your professor for clarification.

In conclusion...

Professional behaviour in an online environment will allow you to improve your communication skills and create professional relationships with both your peers and professors. Maintaining these relationships, along with being respectful and exhibiting academic integrity, are integral to your success. It is crucial to build professional connections that allow you to stay motivated while learning online.

Acting Professional in an Online Environment

Acting Professional in an Online Environment (Text version)

1. Which one of these should NOT be used in an online environment?
 - a. The “raise your hand” feature
 - b. Microphone, camera and headphones
 - c. Your home television while you are in a lecture.
2. What are some of the proper steps to take when emailing your professor?
 - a. Using a proper subject line to summarize your email.
 - b. Include a proper closing statement (Regards, Sincerely, etc.)
 - c. Both of the options.
3. What is one of the biggest concerns in an online environment?
 - a. Academic Integrity
 - b. The weather
 - c. What you will have for lunch

Check your Answers: ¹

Activity Source: “Acting Professional in an Online Environment” In *Learning to Learn Online* by Bailey Csabai; Bilal Sohail; Jykee Pavo; Kristen Swiatoschik; Maryam Odeh; and Nitin Ramesh, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

Attribution & References

Except where otherwise noted, this chapter (text & H5P activity) is adapted from “Acting Professional in an Online Environment (<https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/learnonline/chapter/acting-professional-in-an-online-environment/>)” In *Learning to Learn*

Online by Bailey Csabai; Bilal Sohail; Jykee Pavo; Kristen Swiatoschik; Maryam Odeh; and Nitin Ramesh, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.

Notes

1. 1. c, 2. c, 3. a

1.4 - ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Learning Objectives

- Explain why academic integrity is essential to your progress in a post-secondary program
- Review the Academic Integrity regulations in effect at Georgian College
- Identify examples of the different types of breaches of academic integrity
- Identify resources and services at your college/university to help you complete your assignments with integrity
- Describe how the use of artificial intelligence tools in your academic work could be detrimental to your academic progress

Academic Integrity: A shared responsibility

As a student at Georgian College, you are a part of an academic community that is governed by the fundamental principles of academic integrity. It is important for all members of the community, professors and students alike, to uphold these principles for the advancement of academic scholarship and the continued building of knowledge.

Why you should care

A degree, diploma or certificate that is achieved without compromising your own integrity and simultaneously upholding Georgian College's academic integrity standards, is a true representation of all the hard work and dedication you put into your studies. You can therefore rightfully be proud of your achievement as you have maintained your reputation, as well as that of Georgian College.

You will also be well prepared for success in your career as you have put the necessary

time and effort into your work, increased your knowledge and developed many valuable skills, such as research, critical thinking and writing skills and more.

Explore Academic Integrity and Breaches of Academic Integrity at Georgian College

Read Explore Academic Integrity and Breaches of Academic Integrity at Georgian College in Plain text

Academic Integrity Core values

Watch What is Academic Integrity? (2 mins) (<https://youtu.be/8AKdsDMPv20>) on YouTube.

Georgian College's Academic Integrity Regulations

Georgian College's policies about Academic Integrity are included in the Academic Regulations (<https://cat.georgiancollege.ca/academic-regulations/>) portion of the college website.

All students are required to:

- Read and understand the college's Academic Integrity regulations and consequences for breaches of academic integrity (<https://cat.georgiancollege.ca/academic-regulations/integrity/>)
- Submit course work and meet the learning outcomes of each course without breaches of academic integrity
- Ask for help if they are unsure about any area of the regulations or course learning outcomes

Breaches of Academic Integrity

7 types of breaches of academic integrity in the college's regulations are Cheating, Fabrication, Plagiarism, Facilitating a breach of academic integrity, Impersonation, Denying access to information or material and Copyright violation.

Academic Integrity: Terminology

A lot of terminology surrounds academic integrity.

Different academic institutions used slightly different words or definitions. In the following videos, you may hear some of these terms...

- Academic honesty or integrity
- Academic dishonesty or misconduct
- Plagiarism, cheating, impersonation, fabrication, falsification... and many more

While watching the videos on the following slides, try to match the examples to Georgian College's definitions of Breaches of Academic Integrity [New Tab] (<https://cat.georgiancollege.ca/academic-regulations/integrity/>).

Watch for popups in interactive videos. The video will pause, and you can answer questions to check your learning.

At the end of this slideshow, watch a short video that discusses the Core Values of Academic Integrity before continuing on with your reading.

Identifying Breaches of Academic Integrity: Interactive Video

Watch Academic integrity #2: Types of misconduct (5 mins) on YouTube

(https://youtu.be/9_gwDyvpyf8) and/or read the transcript Academic Integrity Part 2: Types of Academic Misconduct [PDF] (<http://bit.ly/41Z06E>)

At the following times pause the video and compare the example to Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations (<http://cat.georgiancollege.ca/academic-regulations/integrity/>) and answer a question to check your understanding.

1. **Pause at 0:42: What is another example of cheating noted in Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations?**
 - a. Handing in a paper created by a term paper creation organization;
 - b. Using the library database(s) to find research articles for your paper;
 - c. Using Google scholar to locate research articles for your presentation.¹
2. **Pause at 1:07: Which citation style does Georgian College's Academic Integrity regulations list as an example of how one can cite their sources?**
 - a. Chicago Manual of Style

- b. Modern Language Association (MLA)
 - c. American Psychological Association (APA) Style ²
3. **Pause at 1:31: Under what section of Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations would you classify this offence?**
- a. 8.2.1 – Cheating
 - b. 8.2.4 – Facilitating a Breach of Academic Integrity
 - c. 8.2.6 – Denying access to information or material ³
4. **Pause at 2:10: According to Georgian College's Academic Integrity regulations, who would be charged with a breach of academic integrity if friend A completes an exam on behalf of friend B?**
- a. Friend A
 - b. Friend B
 - c. Both Friends A & B ⁴
5. **Pause at 2:30: Under Georgian College's Academic Integrity regulations, what breach of academic integrity is committed if a student resubmits previous work?**
- a. 8.2.4 – Facilitating a breach of academic integrity
 - b. 8.2.3 – Plagiarism
 - c. 8.2.7 – Copyright violation ⁵
6. **Pause at 3:21: What is an example of fabrication provided in the Georgian College Academic Integrity regulations, but not discussed here in the video?**
- a. to invent data based on one experiment, rather than conducting the other experiments required
 - b. to create a quote and in-text citation in your paper for a research article that doesn't exist ⁶
7. **Pause at 3:49: Which type of breach of academic integrity from Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations best matches Improper Research?**
- a. 8.2.1 Cheating
 - b. 8.2.2 Fabrication
 - c. 8.2.3 Plagiarism ⁷
8. **Pause at 4:12: Which type of breach of academic integrity in Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations matches the idea of obstruction?**
- a. 8.2.1 Cheating
 - b. 8.2.4 Facilitating a breach of academic integrity
 - c. 8.2.6 Denying access to information or material ⁸
9. **Pause at 4:40: What part of Georgian's breach of academic integrity definitions**

include aiding and abetting?

- a. 8.2.1 Cheating
- b. 8.2.4 Facilitating a breach of academic integrity
- c. 8.2.6 Denying access to information or material ⁹

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Academic Integrity Values

The International Center for Academic Integrity (2013), defines Academic Integrity as a commitment to uphold six fundamental values in the academic community, even when faced with adversity:

- honesty
- trust
- fairness
- respect
- responsibility
- courage

The following sections define the six academic integrity values in more detail and will give you various real life scenarios to illustrate appropriate and inappropriate actions. The scenarios are adapted from the *Integrity Matters* app (MusicCentric Technologies, 2018).

Honesty

Honest students respect college policies, follow the instructions of their professors and do their work on their own, without any unauthorized help. Dishonest behaviour, such as lying, cheating, fraud, theft, impersonating another person, falsification of data and the like, are morally and ethically not acceptable to a person of integrity.

Scenario 1

Your friend asks you if you want to meet up and do an online quiz together. Somehow you feel uneasy about this. What should you do?

Click on the responses to see the answers to each.

Read Scenario 1 in Plain text

1. **Complete the quiz together:**

You are expected to do your work on your own, unless your instructor tells you specifically that you can work together. Working with someone else on an individual quiz is considered a breach of academic integrity. In Georgian's Academic Integrity policy, this is called **cheating** (a breach of academic integrity) (working with someone else on work which was supposed to be done on your own).

2. **Check the course outline to check if you can work together on the quiz:**

It is a good idea to check the course outline first for your instructor's rules and expectations. However, if you are still unsure after reading the outline, make sure you check directly with your instructor for clarification.

3. **Ask another student if this is allowed:**

Asking another student can be helpful, but to be sure to have the correct information, it is best to check your course outline, and if you are still unsure, to ask your instructor

4. **Ask your professor if this is allowed:**

If you are still unsure after checking your course outline, then do check with your instructor for clarification. This is the best way to make sure that you are meeting the expectations of the assignment and that you are following the rules.

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Trust

If you are always honest, you will be able to build a relationship of trust both with your peers and with your instructors. Trust is established over time and is based mostly on your actions.

Scenario 2

Charlotte has a difficult time writing her essay. She asks you if she can just have a quick look at yours to see how you went about it. As she is your friend, you want to be helpful, and give it to her before you leave for your job. Charlotte is tired and thinks to herself: "I just want to be done with this. I'm going to change a few things. That should be enough to submit it." Why do you think Charlotte made this choice?

Click on the responses to see the answers to each.

Read Scenario 2 in Plain text

1. **To get a better grade:**

This may or may not give her a better grade. Charlotte would only know how well she really did, if she did her own work. Most importantly though is that she is breaking both her friend's and her instructor's trust.

2. **To finish the essay:**

Although Charlotte is able to finish her essay in time, she is doing so by betraying her roommate's and her instructor's trust. She could have avoided this by starting her research earlier, visiting the library's research help service and by getting help at the Writing Centre or the Language Help Centre for her writing.

3. **The essay is too hard for her to do on her own:**

Practice makes perfect! Charlotte can only improve her writing skills if she completes assignments herself. If she needed assistance, she could have asked for help from library professionals for her research and from the Writing Centre or the Language Help Centre for her writing. This is no excuse for betraying her friend's and her instructor's trust.

4. **She believes the changes make it her own work:**

Charlotte may believe that by changing the work enough she has made it her own, but this is not the case because it is still essentially someone else's work that she submits. She not only betrays her friend's and her instructor's trust, but by submitting someone else's work, she is also committing a serious act of plagiarism.

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Fairness

A person of integrity is fair. You are fair to your peers – when you do your own work, to authors – when you acknowledge their work by citing it, to the college – when you respect and follow academic integrity standards, and to alumni – when your behaviour helps to support the value of their degree.

Scenario 3

You are a new student and are juggling to keep up with your courses while also working a part-time job. You are a bit stressed about your upcoming exam. A student who is a year ahead of you offers you a copy of the exam questions to one of your courses. What action would be acceptable?

Click on the responses to see the answers to each.

Read Scenario 3 in Plain text

1. **Take the exam copy to help you prepare:**

If you accept the offer, you will put yourself at an unfair advantage over your classmates, as you won't need to put as much effort into studying your course notes as everyone else in your class.

2. **Decline the offer and keep studying:**

This is the fair and ethical way of responding. It may be very tempting to accept the offer, but you know you would be cheating and have an unfair advantage over your classmates if you did. You may also want to explain Academic Integrity principles to the student and point out that it is a breach of academic integrity to assist another student in cheating.

3. **Don't take the exam copy, but ask to just take a look at the type of questions asked:**

Although this seems harmless, it still gives you an unfair advantage over your classmates, as you would be aware of the types of questions that will be asked in the exam.

4. **Take the exam copy and look at it, but don't study from it:**

You may feel that this approach is fair, because you likely won't remember specific questions, but you'll remember which aspects of the course you should focus on the most, which is not fair to your classmates.

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Respect

You show respect when you adhere to your assignment instructions, when you actively participate in learning and show interest in gaining new knowledge, when you contribute your thoughts to the academic discourse while accepting that others may disagree with you, when you credit others for their ideas, and when you show that you are putting your best efforts forward.

Scenario 4

At the end of your class your instructor says: “Don’t forget your assignment is due next class. Remember, this is an individual assignment. You are meant to work on this alone!” You think, “Oh no, I already completed half of the assignment with Jason and Harpreet!” What should you do?

Click on the responses to see the answers to each.

Read Scenario 4 in Plain text

1. **Finish the rest of the assignment with Jason and Harpreet:**

If you complete the rest of the assignment with your classmates, you are not doing the work as an individual as required. You are not only disrespecting the assignment guidelines and your instructor, but you are also **Cheating** (working with someone else on work which was supposed to be done on your own).

2. **Complete the last half of the assignment on your own:**

In this case, half of the assignment is indeed your original work, but the other half is not. Although this is somewhat better than continuing to finish the assignment with your classmates, you are still disrespecting your instructor and the guidelines given to you, and you are still **Cheating** (working with someone else on work which was supposed to be done on your own).

3. **Ask Jason and Harpreet what they want to do:**

This is not a decision for Jason and Harpreet to make. You must choose the best option for you and take into consideration the results of your action. If you want to be respectful and uphold academic integrity principles, your only option is to start the assignment over on your own. You should also encourage Jason and Harpreet to do the same.

4. **Start the assignment over on your own:**

Although it will take more time and effort to start over, this is an honest way to proceed. Not only will you demonstrate that you understand the material, but by completing your work individually, you show that you respect your instructor and the guidelines given for the assignment.

5. **Consult with your instructor about your situation:**

This is also a good way to proceed. We all forget or misunderstand instructions sometimes, and only realize our error later. Your instructor will appreciate your honesty and will respect you for respecting their instructions. They may tell you to start over or find another acceptable way for you to finish the assignment.

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Responsibility

You show responsible behaviour when you lead by example, when you resist negative peer pressure, and when you discourage others from violating academic integrity principles. Being responsible means being accountable to yourself and others and to do your work to the best of your abilities.

Scenario 5

You have difficulties with your studies, especially in one of your courses. You have been stuck on

your essay for a whole week already. You are afraid that you may fail the course if you can't turn this situation around. What should you do?

Click on the responses to see the answers to each.

Read Scenario 5 in Plain text

1. **Ask your friends for advice:**

Although this is a good place to start and your friends may have some helpful advice, it is your responsibility to take advantage of all the options available to you, such as looking for advice from your professor and the various student support services offered by Georgian College.

2. **Drop the course in which you are not doing well:**

This may feel like a good solution, but it is likely only a temporary fix. If your issues are related to time-management, effective study skills and needing research and writing help, then it is your responsibility to seek out the college's support services to overcome these challenges.

3. **Make no change and hope to pass:**

You may choose to hope things get better by doing nothing, but you should take responsibility for your learning and seek out help available to you from various student support services offered by Georgian College.

4. **Spend more time on campus:**

Spending more time on campus and trying to study more to overcome your difficulties may not result in improvement, but rather in increased stress. If you are struggling, you should seek out support from your instructor and from various student support services, such as the Library and Academic Success (<https://library.georgiancollege.ca/>).

5. **Get a sample paper from an online service:**

These companies often represent themselves as "tutoring" or "writing help" services, but they may try to lure students to buy a paper from them. They often also ask you to upload materials from your courses and sometimes even blackmail students who have used their service. These companies can be highly unethical and you should avoid using them. Instead, if you need help, seek out support from your instructor and from various student services, such as the Library and Academic Success (<https://library.georgiancollege.ca/>). Remember: you can only improve and learn by doing the work yourself!

6. **Use an Artificial Intelligence tool such as ChatGPT to write some or all of your paper:**

Unless your professor has specifically told you that you may use an artificial intelligence tool

such as ChatGPT in your paper, doing so could be considered plagiarism, cheating or another breach of academic integrity. Professors have tools to detect AI writing, and may also recognize that the writing in your paper does not match previous assignments. Choosing to use these tools may result in a serious breach of academic integrity consequence that can affect your ability to progress in your program. Always seek your professor's permission before using these tools in your academic work, and always cite any sources that you use.

7. **Take advantage of the support Georgian College offers:**

This would be your best course of action! If you need help, take advantage of all the approved services available to you at Georgian College, such as Counselling (<https://www.georgiancollege.ca/student-life/student-services/counselling/>), the Library & Academic Success Centre (<https://library.georgiancollege.ca/>) which includes tutoring (<https://library.georgiancollege.ca/tutoring>), the Math Centre (https://library.georgiancollege.ca/math_centre), the Writing Centre and Language Help Centre (https://library.georgiancollege.ca/writing_centre). Remember: you can only improve and learn by doing the work yourself! Getting help from Georgian support services also ensures you are upholding Academic Integrity principles.

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Courage

Upholding academic integrity standards requires courage to resist temptations for the “easy way out” and to speak up against wrongdoing.

Scenario 6

You are entering the room to write your final exam. You see a sign that reads “No electronic devices permitted. Please leave them at the front. You may pick them up after you have finished the exam”. As you enter, you see your classmates put their phones in their pockets. What might you do?

Click on the responses to see the answers to each.

Read Scenario 6 in Plain text

1. **Do what your classmates did and put it in your pocket:**

It is important to follow the guidelines of the exam room and have the courage to not simply follow what your friends are doing. Keeping it in your pocket is not a good choice. To avoid being accused of cheating, your phone should not be accessible to you.

2. **Ask if you can take your phone to keep it safe:**

It is always best to ask if you are unsure about something. Also, while you may not want to tell on your classmates, you should not ignore a behaviour that goes against the rules. Having a phone during an exam may lead a student to use it to gain an unfair advantage over others. By alerting the exam invigilator, you show that you have the courage to uphold academic integrity principles and mention that others are doing so.

3. **Leave it in your bag under your seat:**

This may be an acceptable solution, provided the phone is completely turned off and not accessible to you. However, you absolutely need to ask the exam invigilator if you can do so.

4. **Bring it with you in case of emergency:**

Exam invigilators are trained to respond to emergencies. If you need to be accessible by phone during your exam, you need to make arrangements prior to the exam with the invigilator. If possible, however, notify others that you will not be available by phone for a scheduled period of time.

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Hopefully, these scenarios showed you that you **always** have the opportunity to do the right thing, and that there is help available if you need it. It is up to **you** to make the appropriate choices.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools & Academic Integrity

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT, are becoming increasingly popular and more and more widely available. While these tools may be very appealing, the **unauthorized use of AI tools**, such as (but not limited to) ChatGPT, Copilot, Quillbot, Wordtune, and Textsummarizer, mean that you are not completing assigned work yourself.

Watch Use ChatGPT to write essays for school? Students beware of this (5 mins) on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/AvhGgqBsMkQ>)

Thinking of using AI Tools? Check before you do!

Using an AI tool to complete your work without specific permission from your professor:

- Means handing in work that you did not complete **yourself**
- Affects your **integrity** and **credibility**
- Prevents you from meeting the learning outcomes of your course/program
- Can be detected – text written by AI has numerous features that your professor can identify
- Can result in a Breach of Academic Integrity such as:
 - **cheating** (using technology inappropriately, handing in someone else’s work)
 - **fabrication** (AI tools often fabricate sources, invent citations, and use inaccurate information)
 - **plagiarism**[(AI tools do not properly credit their sources, and you’re plagiarizing if you don’t cite the AI tools yourself)

Using an AI tool? Cite it!

You must cite any work/ideas that are not your own.

Check the APA Guide for tips. (<https://library.georgiancollege.ca/citing/datasets-software>)

Reminder – Plagiarism & Breaches of Academic Integrity

- Submitting work that uses someone else’s words/text without proper citation & referencing is Plagiarism, a breach of academic integrity
- Submitting work that you didn’t complete yourself is cheating, another breach of academic integrity

Breaches of academic integrity can affect your ability to complete an assignment, a course, or progress through your program to graduation. Always seek your professor’s permission before using any sort of AI tool to complete your assignments

What should students know about AI tools & ChatGPT?

Read what should students know about AI tools & ChatGPT in Plain text

- **Misinformation:** ChatGPT uses information from the internet. There is good information online, but there is also discriminatory, outdated and incorrect information as well. ChatGPT is also known to incorrectly explain ideas and misquote sources (<https://mashable.com/article/chatgpt-amazing-wrong>). ChatGPT will make errors, just as humans do!
- **Privacy:** Students must create an account to use ChatGPT, which enables the collection of data, which is a privacy concern. Some AI tools will require students to provide a phone number or other personal information. Students should be mindful of the information they share when creating an account. Please check out the privacy policy (<https://openai.com/policies/privacy-policy>) and terms of use (<https://openai.com/policies/terms-of-use>) for ChatGPT. Keep in mind that while using the tools, your conversations are typically recorded and stored by the tool and used for their purposes.
- **Research Skills:** AI tools like ChatGPT do not necessarily report the sources they use, and may not use sources that satisfy your assignment requirements. In testing, the sources that ChatGPT produces when prompted have frequently shown to be non-existent or inaccurate at best. ChatGPT may appear to conduct research on behalf of students, and this could mean that important skills — researching, critically evaluating information, and problem-solving — will not be learned by students.
- **Copyright:** ChatGPT uses material taken from the internet, generally without the permission of the authors. It has been argued that ChatGPT is ” ‘copyright laundering’ — making works derivative of existing material without breaking copyright” (Hern, 2022, para. 11). Copyright compliance is part of academic integrity, making it very important to be critical about the use of such tools in your academic work.

Source: “What should students know about AI tools & ChatGPT” by Jennifer Easter, licensed under CC BY-NC-SA. / Plain text version added.

Academic Integrity Resources for Students

- Academic Integrity resources at the Library & Academic Success

(https://library.georgiancollege.ca/writing_centre/academic_integrity)

Student & Academic Success Services that can help

Georgian has many fantastic resources to help you gain the skills you need to be successful in your academic work.

Read more about the following services, or stop by the Library and Academic Success (<https://library.georgiancollege.ca/>) or Student Success at your campus for more information.

- Language Help Centre (https://library.georgiancollege.ca/writing_centre/LanguageHelp)
- Writing Centre (http://library.georgiancollege.ca/writing_centre)
- Research Help (<https://library.georgiancollege.ca/doingresearch>)
- Tutors (<http://library.georgiancollege.ca/tutoring>) & Peer Mentors
- Student advisors (<https://georgiancollege.sharepoint.com/sites/student/Student-Services/StudentAdvisors>)

Key Takeaways

- as a student **you are a part** of the scholarly community
- Georgian College's Academic Integrity regulations outline 7 types of breaches of academic integrity: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, facilitating a breach of academic integrity, impersonation, denying access to information or material, copyright violation.
- all members of this community must uphold the six principles of academic integrity: **honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage**
- any breach of academic integrity:

- is dishonest and compromises the worth of other's work
 - undermines the trust between students and professors
 - is unfair to students who pursue their studies honestly
 - disrespects professors and the institution as a whole
 - is irresponsible to yourself, because it prevents you from meaningfully reaching your own scholarly potential
- it is **your responsibility** to uphold academic integrity standards
 - breaches of academic integrity can have severe academic consequences
 - the use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, to complete assignments without your professor's **specific permission** may result in a breach of academic integrity

Attribution & References

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Notes

1. a. Handing in a paper created by a term paper creation organization
2. c. American Psychological Association (APA) Style
3. a. AND c. If the student used the materials themselves, this could be considered cheating under Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations. If the student shared these materials with others, it could also be 8.2.4 - Facilitating a Breach of Academic Integrity.
4. c. Both friends A & B. Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations states that both students would be held responsible for the breach of academic integrity.
5. b. 8.2.3 - Plagiarism. Resubmitting work is considered self-plagiarism under Georgian's regulations.
6. a. This is covered under 8.2.2 - Fabrication in Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations. b. This may also be fabrication, but it's not listed as an example under section 8.2.2 in Georgian's Academic Integrity regulations.
7. b. Yes, this scenario of improper research would likely fall under Fabrication at Georgian College.
8. c. Denying access to information or impeding the learning of others is covered under section 8.2.6.
9. b. Facilitating a breach of academic integrity covers aiding and abetting.