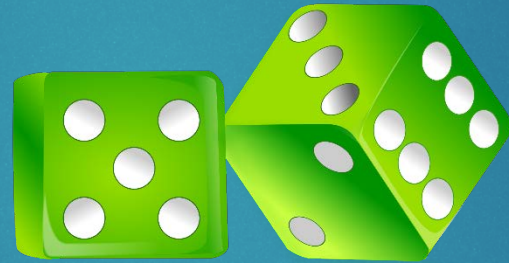# Rolling the Academic Dice on Group Activities: Cheating or Collaboration?
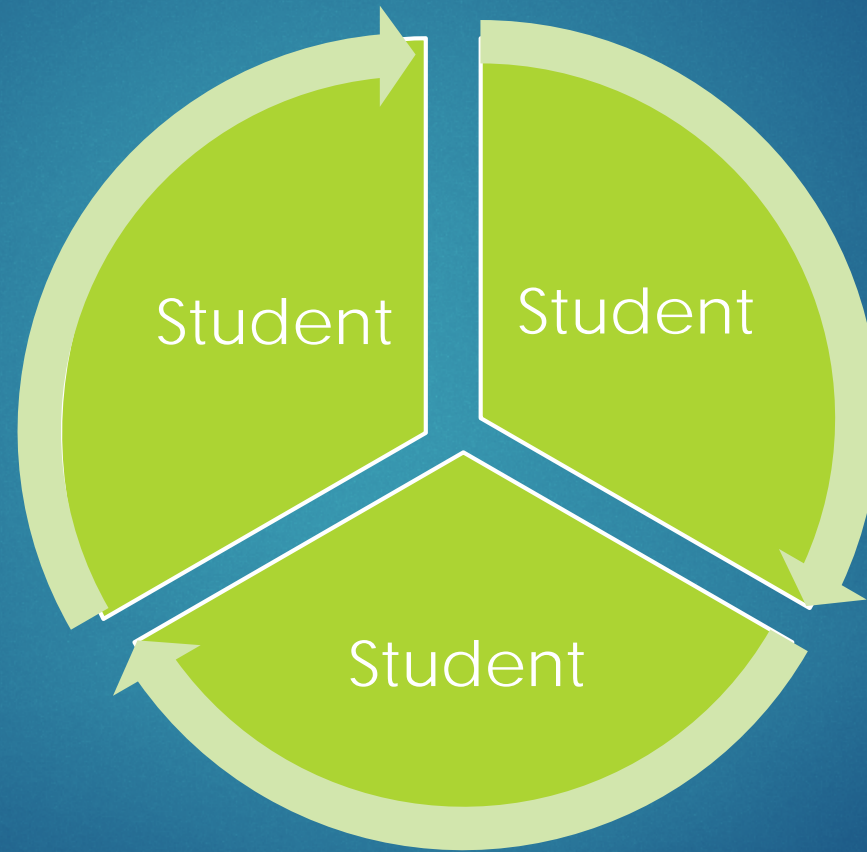
DONNA L GRAHAM & K. JILL RUCKER

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

Group Activities

- Laboratory work
- Team Reports
- Papers
- Presentations

Student

Student

Student

Group activities promote teamwork

- Teamwork is one of the top soft skills desired by business executives (Robles, 2012). Teamwork helps promote:
  - Decision making
  - Conflict resolution
  - Communication
  - Group goals
  - Problem solving skills
- Teamwork should generate great profits for an organization (Nadal, 2015)

Why group projects for students

- Cooperative learning groups successfully enhance the learning environment (Bowling, Cross & Ball, 2017 , Tomcho & Foels 2012)

- Collaboration promotes active learning (Johnson & Smith, 2006)

- Teamwork improves grades on homework assignments (Kovacs, Johnson, & Dixon, 2017)

- Team members retain information longer, learn at deeper level, less likely to drop out of school, acquire greater communication and teamwork skills (Oakley, Felder, Brent, & Elhajj, 2004)
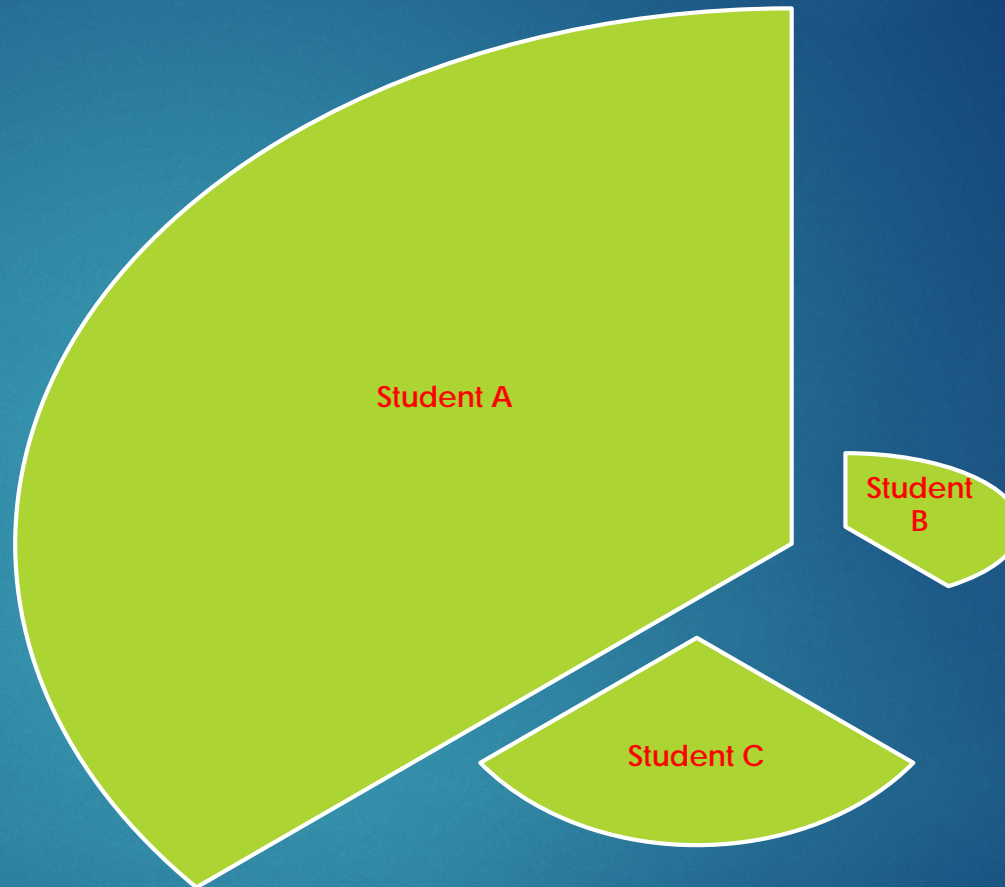
Collaborative Projects may mean few team members are working or learning (Neu , 2012), Bacon (2005)

Situation:

Student A: prepared the assignment or report

Student B: member of the team; put his/her name on the paper

Student C: Participated in the group meetings, discussed the concepts, has a smaller segment of specialized work

Student A

Student B

Student C

Other Collaborative violations

- Facilitating or aiding others
  - Sharing homework
  - Sharing papers
  - Allowing another student to see your work
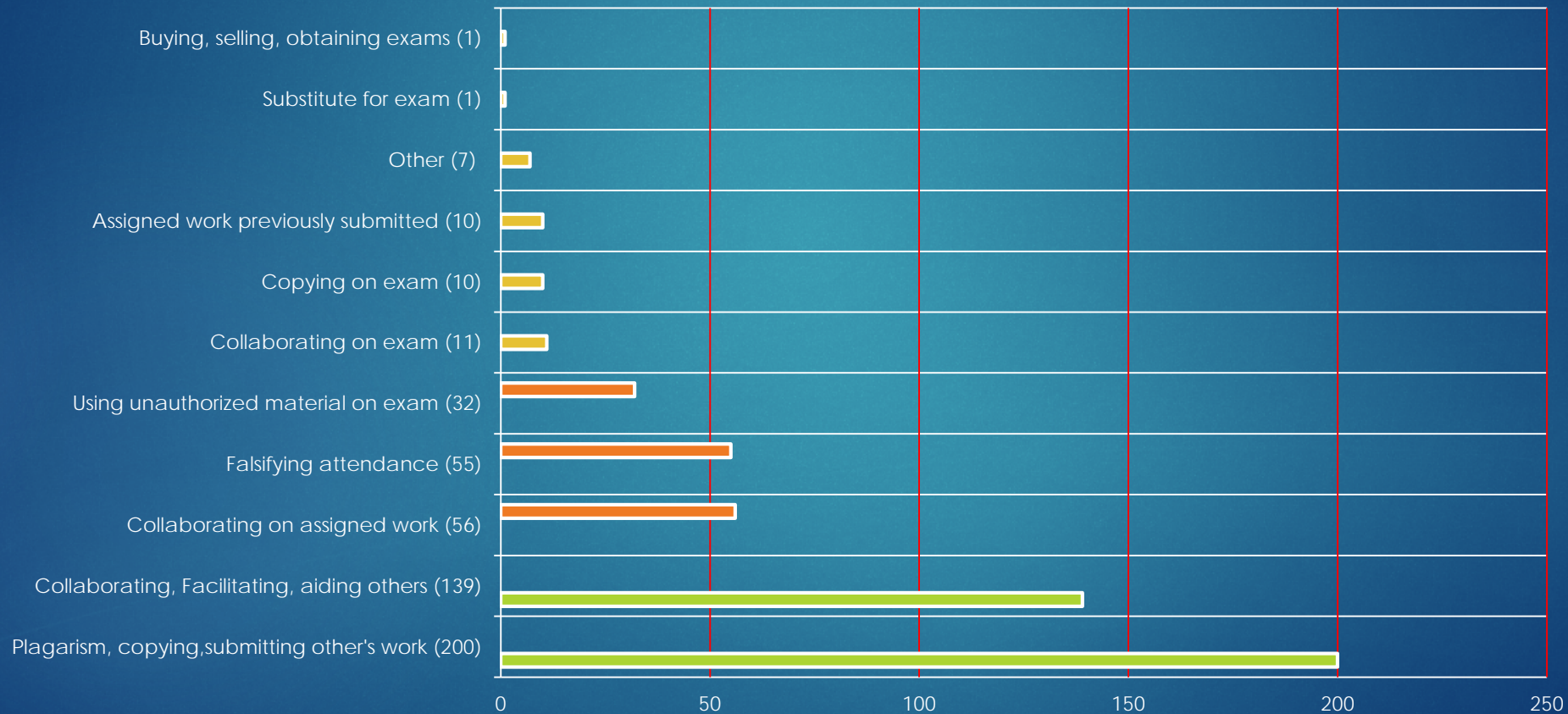
Academic Dishonesty

▶ Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, any act by which a student gains or attempts to gain an academic advantage for him/herself or another by <u>misrepresenting his/her or another's work</u> or by interfering with the <u>independent completion, submission, or evaluation</u> of academic work. (University of Arkansas Academy Integrity Policy)

Academic Integrity Cases 2017

Buying, selling, obtaining exams (1)
Substitute for exam (1)
Other (7)
Assigned work previously submitted (10)
Copying on exam (10)
Collaborating on exam (11)
Using unauthorized material on exam (32)
Falsifying attendance (55)
Collaborating on assigned work (56)
Collaborating, Facilitating, aiding others (139)
Plagarism, copying,submitting other's work (200)

0   50   100   150   200   250

Faculty Perceptions Survey

Student's familiarity with university policy regarding	Familiar	Neither familiar or not familiar	Not Familiar
Plagiarism	63.3%	7.5%	29.2%
Properly citing works	48.8%	9.0%	42.2%
Cheating on exams	78.1%	8.8%	13.1%
Sharing homework assignment	52.0%	13.2%	34.8%
Collaborating on assignments with other students	51.3%	12.9%	35.8%
Faculty familiarity with university's academic integrity policy & procedures	75.2%	10.5%	14.2%

Faculty Perceptions Survey

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
An academic integrity policy and process should be largely <u>educational</u> as opposed to punitive	52.9%	10.8%	36.3%
Academic integrity is primarily the responsibility of the <u>student</u>	72.9%	10.2%	16.9%
Academic integrity is primarily the responsibility of the <u>instructor/faculty member</u>	39.8%	15.4%	44.8%
Academic integrity is primarily the responsibility of the <u>university administration</u>	43.1%	20.9%	36.0%

Recommendations

▶ Review team assignments

▶ Discuss academic policy in class

▶ Trained in effective design and management of team assignments

▶ Clarify group vs. independent work for all assignments

▶ Talk more about academic dishonesty- (personal integrity, cheating hurts everyone, when collaboration crosses over to cheating, take home exams, sharing, etc.)