

Research Paper: the ethics of online cheating (your title here)

Your name here

University of Maryland (this is your affiliation, which is optional)

Abstract

Note: this is *optional*, but it is a nice touch. Should you desire to do this, it's probably easiest to do *after* you have completed the paper. You should model your abstract by carefully reading through the abstracts found in the journal articles that you will have read and used in constructing your paper.

Keywords: (Including keywords is also optional. Should you wish to do this, your keywords might look like the following:) ethics, cheating , Internet

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Overview

Numerous authoritative sources (Ma, Wan, & Lu, 2008), (Tim West, 2004), and (Neil Granitz, 2007) have described a variety of ways in which students are using the Internet to cheat. While the specific activities have not changed in substance, for example plagiarism is still plagiarism, fabrication is still fabrication, etc., certain aspects of the Internet itself has certainly facilitated these activities (Manly, Leonard, & Riemenschneider, 2015). Other sources assert that new ethical models may be necessary owing to the differences intrinsic to Internet technology itself, see (Sharma, Lomash, & Bawa, 2015) and (Molnar, Kletke, & Chongwatpol, 2008).

As students who are designing web-based applications (which is certainly part of the Internet), we confront many questions in this regard, such as:

- What is the nature of the ethical challenges posed by the widespread integration of the “Internet” into every aspect of modern culture?
- Does the Internet fundamentally differ in some respects so that the accepted views of ethics must be revised?
- Notwithstanding the answer to the previous questions, what kinds of ethical theories are feasible?

And, of course, this is only a partial listing of the many questions that will likely prove problematic for modern societies.

Defining your task: What you will do about this

Your task is to write a short paper (1,000 to 1,500 words) that focuses on the question of “ethical” behavior on the web. For instance, many of the papers that are given to you as “starting points” describe a variety of ways in which the Internet has been used

to plagiarize, fabricate, and improperly share academic output. Our data (tracking data generated by the University of Maryland) shows various forms of cheating, both with and without the aide of the Internet, is prevalent and increasing in frequency; hence, this is a relevant and timely area of investigation.

This is a somewhat open-ended assignment. That being said, you should choose a particular topic that you read in your research; for example, the impact of peer-group pressure in certain cheating scenarios, or how the Internet (technology) has impacted a particular practice, such as plagiarism.

In the early part of your paper, you would use your resources to define and elaborate the topic and motivate your question (tell us why it's interesting). You might then continue by presenting ethical points of view, by way of comparing and contrasting outcomes or assertions you wish to make. Finally, in the concluding section of your paper, you would recapitulate the important elements of your paper and conclude with some recommendations, etc.

Required Elements

Length and formatting requirements. Your paper must consist of a title page, which may be a separate page, or may appear as the first text on your first page. Your paper must consist of at least 1000 (one thousand) words of text—not including text for the title page, citations, and/or any captions or tables that might appear in your document. Your paper should not exceed 1,500 (fifteen hundred) words in length.

The body of your document should be double-spaced, be contained within 1 inch margins all around each page, and be written in a 12-point TimesRoman (or similar) font.¹

If you stay within these guidelines, plan on the body of your text requiring at least 4 (four) and not more than 6 (six) complete pages.

While no specific word processing or typesetting program is required, we strongly

¹In other words: your final product should look a lot like these instructions!

recommend that you use this assignment as an opportunity to learn a system such as L^AT_EX, which is used to prepare publication quality documents in a variety of settings.²

References and Attribution. We have already provided some academic journal articles as “starting points” for this paper. You are required to provide at least two additional citations to the dozen or so papers that have already been provided to the class in general.

Naturally, we will look for proper use of citations throughout your paper. In particular: you should paraphrase content that you cite whenever feasible. Use verbatim quotations only when the actual language used by the writer(s) is relevant to something you need to say. Mindlessly including lots of verbatim text from sources clutters your paper and creates the impression in the reader’s mind that you are “padding” the assignment.

You may use either APA or MLA citations in your paper. Do not create your own citation/reference scheme. Notice, for this document, I used the APA (American Psychological Society) standards, which is required by many academic journals.

Required content

As the heading implies: we will look for the following, in this rough order, when assessing your paper.

Introductory material. Your paper should explicitly define a question of ethics that is relevant to your topic as it has been described by the supporting papers already provided to you for this assignment.

Expository material. Your exposition should define the parameters of your argument, the school(s) of ethical thought that you intend to use, and an explanation of why you feel that these choices are warranted.

Your arguments should be logically developed and flow naturally. Remember also that a good argument should also consider possible counter-arguments.

²For example, I used L^AT_EX to prepare this document, which is an example of the APA manuscript format, which is perfect for this assignment.

Concluding material. You should taper your arguments and focus your discussion to several fine points. In your conclusion, you should remind the audience of how your ethical arguments related to the original question(s) posed in the Introductory material.

References. Your References should appear under a separate heading —preferably on a new page. In any event, your References must appear after the galley (the text that comprises your paper). Again, you are encouraged to use either APA or MLA style citations and references. If you choose to use something else, make sure that you can identify the style and that you use it consistently throughout your paper.

No reference may appear in your list of References that is not explicitly cited in your paper.

Assessment

A specific rubric is provided with the original assignment. We have only to add a few fine points here.

Language matters . . .

Because many students are not native English speakers, matters of spelling, punctuation and grammar are not assessed —unless, of course, the diction and/or usage impacts the grader’s ability to understand what has been written.

Do’s and Don’ts . . .

- Do submit early drafts. We won’t read these, but, in the event of a catastrophe, you will have something that can be assessed.
- Don’t procrastinate or attempt to write and submit this paper in a weekend or some such thing.
- Do re-read and edit your paper throughout the creation process.

- Don't use language or draw on material that is uncomfortable to you. Write plainly. Focus on what you know. For example: if you are *not* an expert on statistical modeling and experimental design, don't try to speak to those points—instead, take them as they were presented in the original source(s).

Finally, keep in mind that we are interested in your thoughts on these topics. You are not expected to create anything “new;” instead, we want to know that every student has at least thought about some of the definitions, concepts, and concerns found in the literature.

References

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