

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY THROUGH RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

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Abstract: Academic Integrity Matters (AIM) is a program at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities that uses restorative justice principles to help students to learn about and understand the impact of scholastic dishonesty. The poster will describe the process for this program, the process for adjudicating scholastic dishonesty at the University of Minnesota, and principles of restorative justice.

Academic Integrity Matters (AIM) is a program offered to students who have been accused of scholastic dishonesty and accept responsibility for violating the Student Conduct Code. Students are eligible to participate if they have not had prior incidents of scholastic dishonesty and are not subject to additional sanctions such as probation, suspension, or expulsion. This program provides a greater understanding of academic integrity and an opportunity to repair the harm caused by scholastic dishonesty through participation in a community meeting.

During the community meeting, a group of student participants share with a group of community members (students, faculty, and staff) what happened with regard to scholastic dishonesty. The student participants and community members each discuss the impact of the scholastic dishonesty and then agree on an educational opportunity the student can participate in to demonstrate understanding of academic integrity.

To complete this program students who have accepted responsibility for violating the Student Conduct Code attend a 2-hour community meeting and complete agreed upon educational experiences determined by the community participants at the meeting. Upon successful completion of the educational agreement, student records will become “non-disciplinary.” This process is confidential and information about participants is not be shared. Participants only share their first name or a pseudonym during the community meeting.

Here are just a few of the responses from AIM students when asked this question:

What was your most significant take-away from participating in the AIM program?

The professors and instructors want to help you.

Dishonesty impacts [the] entire UMN community.

The impact that cheating has on faculty and instructors

There are so many useful resources in the university.

That everything will be okay and I can try to move on.

That even though academic dishonesty may not be an intent, that mistakes can happen that qualify as dishonesty.

That this impacts everyone and every facet of the University and there is a process to move forward and learn from this situation instead of being stigmatized by it.

Learn this accident and keep it mind to remind me in the future, I will put this incident behind me.

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