College Faculty and Administrators' Perception of Student Ethics

Linda K. Lau
Longwood University

James C. Haug
Longwood University

Linda Berns Wright
Longwood University

In this study, we investigate the perception of academia - faculty, administrators, coaches, and staff – concerning students' ethical behaviors. A survey questionnaire was emailed to 738 university employees and 121 responses were received. Our research results concluded that the faculty recognizes the importance of their actions as role models for students. Further, they understand that they can have an impact on students' behaviors as they face ethical issues in the campus environment. The majority of faculty expressed the desire to discipline cheating students using two methods: the University Honor Board and the course instructor.

INTRODUCTION

Cheating is a topic of much debate in higher education. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* published at least a dozen articles during the past year with topics ranging from issues related to professors, students, and the facilitating impact of technology. Researchers have been actively studying ethics since the 1960's (Galbraith and Webb, 2010). In an effort to understand more about ethical attitudes and behaviors, we examine recent articles about suggested causes and solutions in this area. Ethics is considered an important topic in academic settings, with headlines filled with stories about ethical failures in business. College cheating is pervasive, with many studies reporting over 60% of students admitting to cheating behavior and trends suggesting that these numbers are increasing (Simkin and McLeod, 2009). As stipulated in *Standard 15: Management of Curricula*, AACSB requires that ethics education be part of the curriculum in accredited undergraduate and graduate business schools (Business Accreditation Standards, 2011). Business colleges are particularly concerned because cheating scandals can have a negative impact on the quality and reputation of their programs. Many pedagogical approaches to ethics in business education focus on raising awareness of ethical issues and encouraging class discussions on various approaches to resolving ethical problems. In the business world, we have seen evidence of ethical and moral decline since the lines between right and wrong have been blurred. To counter this, professors need to reinforce appropriate ethical behavior in the classroom to influence students' behaviors (Galbraith and Webb, 2010). Students can identify theories and discuss various sides to fictitious situations, or to events that have been covered in the media.

When students are put in situations that test their personal actions, however, their ethical behavior is often lacking. Theoretical discussions are not guiding their behaviors. The major reasons given by students for cheating behavior focus in four areas: necessity (time demands, so little time and so many assignments); opportunity (the internet is a facilitator); perceived indifference (the instructor doesn't really care and the possibility of being caught is low and/or the penalty is low) (Comas-Forgas and Sureda-Negre, 2010); and the desire to do well and succeed is very high (Simkin and McLeod, 2010). The trend of increasing problems dealing with cheating is being reported on a global basis (Comas-Forgas and Sureda-Negre, 2010), but there seems to be little or no disincentive to cheat in college.

While technology can increase the availability of cheating opportunities, there is no substantial evidence that cheating is more likely to occur in a Web-based environment. However, the perception of the lack of supervision can be a contributor to cheating behavior. On the other hand, alternative Web-based assessments can be designed to reduce the advantages of cheating. Online assignments can be student-centered and interactive (Styron and Styron, 2010).

The climate and environment of the educational institution will also have an impact on cheating behavior. The existence of an honor code tends to result in a lower incidence of cheating. Such a code enhances the perception of academic integrity within the institution. When ethical behavior is perceived as a fundamental value within the college or university, students are less likely to cheat (Roig and Marks, 2006). Student cheating is less common when ethical policies are in place and communicated to the students. When students are aware of cheating policies and believe that they are important policies, they are more likely to comply. If students think that faculty don't care about cheating, or don't care about them, that they are more interested in completing their research, cheating is more common. At the other extreme, a "zero tolerance policy" about cheating may not work, either. Students' attitudes toward cheating depend on the activity under consideration. Not everything is equally bad (Levy and Rakovski, 2006). When institutional cultural norms include ethical behavior and trust, ethical behavior is more likely to be seen in student behavior. Even in an online environment, cheating is less likely when ethical norms are clearly communicated (Mitchell, 2009).

One common problem mentioned in the literature that contributes to student cheating is the low likelihood of getting caught and/or being punished. Many professors are lenient with first offenders, and cheating policies and procedures for dealing with cheating vary across institutions (Frost, et al., 2007). Some professors find the procedures for handling cheating situations too onerous because it is hard to get proof and they fear the possibility of negative consequences from students after having reported cheating episodes (Keith-Spiegel, et.al., 1998). When the process of reporting cheating is easier and students believe that cheating may be reported, their reported future intent to cheat is uncertain. Expectations about professor conduct can have an impact on student intentions (Staats, et al., 2009). Students cheat because they can. When professors accept this possibility and assume the responsibility of trying to influence behavior in the other direction, positive outcomes are possible. Awareness about dishonesty needs to be acknowledged. Students need to be reminded about the need for integrity and honesty. Policies to inhibit cheating must be enforced. Finally, instructors must have and demonstrate a commitment to education and classroom effectiveness (Berschback, 2011; Frost, et al., 2007; Hall, 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Both students and faculty share common ground on many ethical issues: turning the other way when encountering cheating and berating a student who is not present is usually considered unethical. Morgan and Korschgen's 2001 research examined both faculty and students' perception of ethics in the same study. Using the same survey questionnaire, faculty and students rated the ethicalness of 16 faculty behaviors on a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 representing not at all ethical to 5 representing extremely ethical. Interestingly, the results revealed that students and faculty shared the same ethical feelings on most faculty behaviors. However, as Morgan and Korschgen (2001) found, behaviors like using bad language, accepting payment for unused text book review copies, ensuring better evaluation scores by giving easy exams, and romantic relations between students and faculty, were all perceived as more

unethical than did undergraduates. With regard to selling text books, Robie, et al. (2003) found that about 30% of faculty sold unused review copies of text books at a value of over $80 within a year's timeframe in a study covering 14 universities (n = 236).

The existence of an active honor code can also impact faculty perceptions. McCabe, et al. (2001) conducted a decade of research on cheating in academic institutions, and they found that having a code in place led faculty to believe that students should take a more proactive role in the judicial proceedings incident to student cheating. They also suggested that involving both faculty and students in an ongoing dialogue about integrity issues was important, not just relying on formal ceremonies or brief orientation sessions. Another way to help focus on values and trust is for faculty to incorporate ethics issues in class-related exercises. Kidder, et al. (2002) found that 86% of faculty surveyed in the Maricopa Community College system in Arizona already helped students focus on values during class time.

Both in and out of the classroom, professors must be aware that their example and actions speak louder than words. Kuther (2003) conducted two studies that examined how college students perceived the ethical responsibilities of their professors. Kuther (2003) found that students have definite expectations with respect to the behavior and conduct of faculty with respect to professional activities, and that professors should uphold the moral integrity of the world of academia. This extends to fairness in grading for the courses taught, dating and having sexual relationships with students, as well as drug use. Friedman, et al. (2005) also investigated the students' perception of faculty ethics on topics ranging from grading to sexual advances. Based on 350 responses from a large urban university, they concluded that only a little more than 50% of the respondents found their professors to be either ethical or extremely ethical, with dishonest grading techniques mentioned as considered unethical by students. There was sufficient empirical evidence to suggest that there were some significant differences in perception between the male and female respondents. Davies, et al. (2009) confirmed that the absence of well-defined policies and procedures helped to hinder student learning, highlighting 42 management practices that helped to form perceptions on the part of faculty about practices that had definite consequences on the ethical climate within a midsized, Midwestern liberal arts university.

Occasionally, students claim that they are unaware of the honor policies of their institution. In a survey of 1,100 students and 42 faculty members conducted at a small private university in the southwest U.S, Papp and Wertz (2009), on the contrary, revealed that 91% of the students were actually aware of the academic integrity policies. But, despite general awareness, sometimes a misaligned incentive program can create a dysfunction. To avoid this situation, Cavico and Mujtaba (2009) found that the dean's leadership can be very important with respect to building trust with both faculty and administration. It was felt that an open environment of free discourse that encouraged dissenting ideas from a diverse group of faculty was an important factor in creating a climate conducive to ethics and social responsibility. Other ways to improve the ethical climate were cited by Yahr, et al. (2009) to include mentoring, live training sessions, or electronic tutorials, which helped to shed light on professional ethical conduct of both faculty and administrators. Yahr, et al. (2009) also examined college faculty and administrators' perception towards their institutions' codes of ethics and they argued that a properly designed and implemented university code of ethics has a significant and positive impact on ethical behaviors.

Consequently, based on the literature review conducted for this study, the purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding and more insight into the seemingly unknown caveat of student ethics from the faculty and college administrators' perspective.

Hypotheses
Based on the research findings uncovered in the literature review, the current research attempts to examine the perception of student ethics from the academia's point of view. The purpose of the research, therefore, is to examine:

1. The academia's perception of whether education and college faculty play an important role in developing the value system of our college students;
2. The academia's perception and attitude towards cheating on campus;
3. The academia's perception of the impact of technology on cheating among students;

4. The academia's perception of the importance of ethics among college students;
5. How academia prefer to address academic misconduct.

Six propositions, with eight competing null hypotheses, were developed to test and describe how academia perceived student ethics on college campus. The null hypotheses were tested for correlation and association between the variables. If there is sufficient evidence to support (reject) the null hypothesis, then the alternate hypothesis will be accepted. In this study, the word "academia" is used to represent faculty, administrators, coaches, and staff of the university.

Proposition 1 Impact of Education and Academia on Student Ethics
The first proposition investigates the impact of college education and academia involvement in shaping students' ethical behaviors. This proposition is tested using the following two null hypotheses:
1. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia perceive that college education has no influence on students' ethical behaviors.
   Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia perceive that college education has an influence on students' ethical behaviors.
2. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia perceive that faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators do not play an important part in shaping students' ethical behaviors.
   Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia perceive that faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators play an important part in shaping students' ethical behaviors.

Proposition 2 Academia's Attitude towards Student Cheating
The second research question addresses the academia's perception and attitude towards cheating among college students. This proposition is tested using the following two null hypotheses:
3. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia believe that cheating is not prominent among college students.
   Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia believe that cheating is prominent among college students.
4. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia believe that college students did not engage in unethical behaviors.
   Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia believe that college students did engage in unethical behaviors.

Proposition 3 Academia's Perception of the Impact of Technology
The third proposition addresses the use of technology in and outside of the classroom. With the rapid increase in offerings of online and hybrid (a combination of face-to-face and online) courses, there is a growing concern among faculty members with regard to the lack of supervision and increased online cheating. In this study, technology is defined by the use of Blackboard course management system, laptop computer, calculators, smart phones, etc.
5. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia believe that technology does not play an important role in student cheating.
   Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia believe that technology plays an important role in student cheating.

Proposition 4 Academia's Perception of Student Ethics
Are our college students ethical human beings? Do our college students believe that ethics is very important to them? Proposition 4 is developed to evaluate the academia's perception of student ethics. Basically, the following hypothesis is developed to see how academia perceived the importance of student ethics:
6. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia do not believe that ethics is important to college

students.

           Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia believe that ethics is important to college students.

Proposition 5 Academic Misconduct

This study proposed to investigate the preferred method(s) of discipline among the academia, and also to determine the academia's likelihood of filing charges against the cheating party using the following hypothesis:

7. Null Hypothesis (H_0): If they caught their students cheating, academia will not file charges against the students.

           Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): If they caught their students cheating, academia will file charges against the students.

Proposition 6 Ethical Environment on Campus

The researcher's university strongly encourages diversity among races and sex and a high degree of professionalism and integrity among faculty members. Proposition 6 examines the ethicality of the campus environment using the following hypothesis:

8. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia believe that the university did not provide an ethical environment on campus.

           Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia believe that the university did provide an ethical environment on campus.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An online survey was administered to all the faculty, administrators, and staff at a local, 4-year, mid-size, public university situated in the middle of Virginia. This section will describe the participants and the survey questionnaire utilized in this study.

Participants

This study was conducted by three faculty members from the Business College of a liberal arts, public university located in central Virginia. The University has three colleges – Business and Economics, Arts and Science, and Education and Human Services – and has slightly less than 5,000 students. The majority of the students are undergraduates. There were 215 instructional faculty, 56 adjuncts, 170 administrative/professional faculty, 297 classified employees, and 32 wage employees, for a total of 770 employees. The student to faculty ratio is 18:1. The survey questionnaire was pre-tested and emailed to all, except wage, employees, during the Spring 2011 semester.

Survey Questionnaire

Lau, Caracciolo, Roddenberry, and Scroggins (2011) and Lau and Haug (2011) developed and administered a survey questionnaire to investigate college students' perception of ethics and how their perception were influenced by factors such as sex, major field of study, affiliated college, and student classification. In this study, the same survey questionnaire was modified and adapted to solicit the academia's – faculty, administrators, coaches, and staff – view of student ethics. After the survey questionnaire was pretested with a small sample, it was submitted and received approval from the University's Human Subjects Research Review Committee.

The survey questionnaire, consisting of two sections, was created on the SurveyMonkey.com Website. The first section collected demographic information such as sex, length of service, faculty rank, affiliated college, and administrator/staff role. The first question in the second section asked the respondents to choose the perceived sources of student ethics. The next two questions asked about respondents' preference for discipline method if they caught student cheating, and whether respondents were aware that the University has a *Statement on Professional Ethics* listed on the University's Web site.

To determine the respondents' perception of student ethics, participants were asked to rate 18 interdependent items using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 representing Strongly Disagree to 5 representing Strongly Agree. These responses will provide a better understanding of the respondents' perception of student cheating on campus and the role that college education plays in influencing students' ethical behaviors.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

An email with the survey Website address was sent to 738 employees (except the wage employees) on campus, and 121 responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 16.4%. After the survey questionnaire was administered, useful data were collected, organized, summarized, and meaningful descriptive statistics of the sample population were extracted using the SPSS software program.

The following subsection will describe the demographics of the respondents in terms of employee category, sex, length of service, and affiliated college. The Hypothesis Testing and Discussions subsection will describe the factor analysis procedure and the data analysis for the six propositions.

Demographics

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are tabulated in Table 1. When the survey questionnaire was sent via email to all employees with an email address (738), 121 of them responded – 84 females (69.4%) and 37 males (30.6%) – resulting in a 16.4% response rate. Sixty-eight of the total 271 instructional faculty (215 full-time faculty and 56 adjuncts) responded to the survey, resulting in a response rate of 25.09% among faculty members. The remaining respondents, 53 of them, were non-faculty, resulting in a response rate of 11.35% among the administrators and staff. However, some faculty members are also considered administrative personnel, for instance, the department chairs, and they were double-counted under faculty and administrators.

Table 1 also contained relevant information such as the breakdown for instructional faculty, administrators, and staff, and length of service. Nearly 40% of the respondents were relatively new to the university, serving five or less years at the university, 26.4% of the participants had worked for 6 to 10 years at the university, with the remaining one-third of the respondents working for more than 11 years. Instructional faculty were categorized into one of the three colleges: Business and Economics (22.4%), Arts and Sciences (52.2%), and Education and Human Services (20.9%). These percentages are relatively close to the proportion of students enrolled in the three colleges.

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (65.3%) were aware that the university has a *Statement of Professional Ethics* posted on the University's Web site, while the remaining one-third of the respondents were not aware of the online document.

Hypothesis Testing and Discussions

The academia (faculty, administrators, coaches, and staff) perception of student ethics and the role that faculty and staff played in shaping student's ethical beliefs were analyzed using eighteen 5-point Likert questions on the survey questionnaire. Most of the eighteen items are significantly correlated with one another, either positively or negatively, at the 0.005 significance level. The test statistics for Bartlett's test of sphericity showed that the approximate chi-square value was 490.95, with a 136 degree of freedom, which was also significantly high at the 0.005 level. In addition, the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.639, which was significantly larger than the desirable value of 0.5. These two tests, coupled with the reasonably large sample population, strongly suggest that factor analysis is an appropriate technique to be performed to the data set. The Principle Component Analysis extraction method was used to extract the primary variables, which were rotated using the Varimax procedure with the Kaiser Normalization rotation method. Two variables with a factor loading of less than 0.4 were removed, and based on Kaiser criterion's suggestion, the remaining sixteen exploratory variables were reduced to six underlying constructs having eigenvalues of 1 or higher. These

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHICS INFORMATION

	Count	Percent
Gender		
Male	37	30.6%
Female	84	69.4%
Total	121	100%
Length of Service		
0-5 years	48	39.7%
6-10 years	32	26.4%
11-15 years	16	13.2%
16-19 years	8	6.6%
20 or more years	17	14.0%
Total	121	100%
Faculty		
Assistant Professor	23	33.8%
Associate Professor	21	30.9%
Full Professor	8	11.8%
Lecturer	8	11.8%
Adjunct	8	11.8%
Total	68	100%
College		
Business and Economics	14	20.9%
Arts and Sciences	35	52.2%
Education and Human Services	15	22.4%
Library	2	3.0%
Other	1	1.5%
Total	67	100%
Non-Faculty		
Administrator	16	26.2%
Coach	2	3.3%
Staff	41	67.2%
Other	2	3.3%
Total	61	100%

six factors explained 66.104% of the total variance. The standard deviation for the 18 items ranges from 0.614 to 1.092, indicating that the data points are clustered closely around the mean. Factor 1 explained nearly 20% of the variances, while Factors 2 and 3 explained 11.9% and 11.07% of the variances, respectively. All six factors were tested for reliability using the Cronbach's alpha α (coefficient alpha). The first three of the six factors possessed a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.6 or higher, and therefore are considered fairly reliable (Malhotra, 2010; Zikmund & Babin, 2007). Hence, only three out of the six factors and some of the individual variables will be used in this research. The six factors, with their corresponding variables, mean, standard deviation, the factors' rotated loading, and the Cronbach's alpha α are summarized in Table 2.

Proposition 1 Impact of Education and Academia on Student Ethics
1. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia perceive that college education has no influence on students' ethical behaviors.
    Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia perceive that college education has an influence on students' ethical behaviors.
2. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia perceive that faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators do not play an important part in shaping students' ethical behaviors.
    Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia perceive that faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators play an important part in shaping students' ethical behaviors.

Proposition 1 examined the role that college education and academia play in shaping students' ethical behaviors. The first hypothesis was tested using two items on the survey questionnaire. Item # 21, *Education plays a big role in teaching students about ethics*, has a relatively high mean of 3.95 for a 5-point Likert scale and a standard deviation of 0.784. Not surprisingly, an overwhelming 82.6% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree with this statement, with less than 7% of the respondents strongly disagree or disagree and less than 11% of them chose to remain neutral on this issue. Item # 23, *By the time students reach college age it is too late to teach them about ethics*, has a mean of 1.83 (negative correlation) and a standard deviation of 0.833. Similarly, it is reasonable to expect that majority of the participants (87.6%) either disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. Less than 5% of the participants agree or strongly agree with this question and less than 8% of them prefer to remain neutral on this item.

Respondents were asked if they felt that faculty, administrators, coaches, and staff consistently help students develop values in their college lives (item # 24), incorporate ethics training into their interaction and contact with students (item # 25), and enforce ethical standards with their students (item # 26). As illustrated in Table 2, all three items loaded relatively high in factor 1, and this factor is labeled as *Academia Impact on Student Ethics*. All three items have a relatively high mean of 4.01, 3.50, and 3.36, respectively. The standard deviation for these three items ranged from 0.780 to 0.885. Majority of the respondents (80.99%) believed that academia consistently help students develop values in their college lives (item # 24), compared to 57.02% of them who believed that academia consistently incorporate ethics training into their interaction and contact with our students (item # 25). A smaller proportion of the respondents (52.89%) believed that academia consistently enforce ethical standards with our students (item # 26). A more in-depth analysis of the data set revealed that there were no significant differences in the academia's perception among the respondents in terms of their sex, length of service, or college affiliation. However, there was a statistically significant difference in the academia's perception between the faculty and the non-faculty group which consisted of administrators, staff, and coaches. The two populations – faculty and non-faculty – were tested using the two-independent-sample t-test at the 0.05 significance level (*t-value* = -2.704, *df* = 119, *p* = 0.008).

In conclusion, there is sufficient empirical evidence to reject both null hypotheses and therefore to accept both alternate hypotheses in Proposition 1 that education and academia do in fact play an important part in shaping students' ethical behaviors.

TABLE 2
FACULTY ETHICS FACTORS

Q #	Components	Mean	Std Dev	Factor Loading
Factor 1 Academia Impact on Student Ethics		Cronbach's alpha α = **0.745**		
24	Faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators consistently help students develop values in their college lives.	4.01	0.780	.819
25	Faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators consistently incorporate ethics training into their interaction and contact with our students.	3.50	0.858	.816
26	Faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators consistently enforce ethical standards with our students.	3.36	0.885	.737
Factor 2 Student Cheating		Cronbach's alpha α = **0.634**		
11	I believe that none of our students have cheated in high school.	1.44	0.632	.868
12	I believe that none of our students have cheated in college.	1.55	0.732	.868
13	I don't think that our students abide by the University Honor Code. (negative correlation)	2.89	0.990	-.475
Factor 3 Impact of Technology		Cronbach's alpha α = **0.647**		
16	It is easier to cheat in an online or hybrid class than in a face-to-face class.	3.54	1.092	.845
17	It is easier for students to cheat when technology is involved, e.g., Blackboard, calculator, laptop computer, etc.	3.54	1.028	.828
22	It is our responsibility to eliminate as many opportunities to cheat as possible.	3.50	1.042	.500
Factor 4 Perception of Student Ethics		Cronbach's alpha α = **0.410**		
10	I hold our students to the same ethical standards that I hold myself to.	4.34	0.770	.690
21	Education plays a big role in teaching students about ethics.	3.95	0.784	.692
23	By the time students reach college age it is too late to teach them about ethics. (negative correlation)	1.83	0.833	-.448
Factor 5 Ethical Environment on Campus		Cronbach's alpha α = **0.530**		
19	I believe that student-athletes tend to cheat more often than non-athletes.	2.35	0.937	.672
20	I believe that male students tend to cheat more often than female students.	2.65	0.901	.835
Factor 6 Ethical Environment on Campus/Academic Misconduct		Cronbach's alpha α = **-0.371**		
15	I would be more likely to press charges against students I found cheating if the process of filing charges was less complicated. (negative correlation)	3.11	1.011	-.818
18	I consider most of my co-workers to be ethical human beings.	4.08	0.614	.524
Questions Removed for Factor Analysis				
9	I believe that ethics are very important to our students.	3.91	1.072	
14	If I suspect that our students have violated the Academic Honor Code, I will file charges against them.	3.64	0.784	

Proposition 2 Academia's Attitude towards Student Cheating

3. Null Hypothesis (H$_0$): Academia believe that cheating is not prominent among college students.
    Alternate Hypothesis (H$_a$): Academia believe that cheating is prominent among college students.
4. Null Hypothesis (H$_0$): Academia believe that college students did not engage in unethical behaviors.
    Alternate Hypothesis (H$_a$): Academia believe that college students did engage in unethical behaviors.

The second proposition examining the academia's perception and attitude towards cheating among college students was tested using two null hypotheses. The factor analysis conducted on the data set revealed that three items were loaded at 0.40 or higher on Factor 2, which is labeled as *Student Cheating*. For item #11, *I believe that none of our students have cheated in high school*, and item # 12, *I believe that none of our students have cheated in college*, yielded a staggering 91.74% and 88.43%, respectively, of respondents who either strongly disagree or disagree with the two items. In other words, majority of the academia surveyed believe that our college students have cheated in high schools and colleges. This finding is consistent with several conclusions in previous research (e.g., Simkin and McLeod, 2010; Staats, et al., 2009; Styron and Styron, 2010). The means and standard deviations for items # 11 and # 12 are 1.44 and 0.632, and 1.55 and 0.732, respectively. Approximately 41% of the respondents either strongly disagree or disagree with item # 13, *I don't think that our students abide by the University Honor Code* (negative correlation). In other words, slightly more than 40% of the respondents believe that students do abide by the University Honor Code, while nearly 30% of them believe that students did not abide by the University Honor Code and nearly 29% of the respondents have no opinion on this statement. In other words, nearly 60% of the respondents either believe that students did not abide by the University Honor Code or that they have nothing to comment on this issue. The mean for this question is 2.89 and the standard deviation is 0.99. In conclusion, there is sufficient empirical evidence to reject the two null hypotheses in Proposition 2 and to accept the two alternate hypotheses that academia do believe that cheating is prominent among college students and that they do engage in unethical behaviors in the classrooms. Current research indicated that the creation and implementation of an honor code is a first step to reducing cheating on campus, but the existence of an honor code does not automatically lead to academic integrity (McCabe, et al., 2001; Roig and Marks, 2006).

Again, t-tests and Chi-Square tests conducted on the data set revealed that there were no significant differences in the academia's perception of student cheating among the male and female respondents, the new hires or seasoned employees, and the faculty across the three colleges. However, the two populations – faculty and non-faculty (administrators, coaches, and staff) – were tested using the two-independent-sample t-test at the 0.05 significance level, and the t-statistics indicated that there was a significant difference in the perception of student cheating between the faculty and non-faculty group (*t*-value = -2.934, *df* = 118, *p* = 0.004).

Proposition 3 Academia's Perception of the Impact of Technology

5. Null Hypothesis (H$_0$): Academia believe that technology does not play an important role in student cheating.
    Alternate Hypothesis (H$_a$): Academia believe that technology plays an important role in student cheating.

This study proposed that the use of technology inside and outside of the classroom encourages cheating among college students. As illustrated in Table 2, factor 3, labeled as *Impact of Technology*, received a factor loading of 0.4 or higher for the following three items:

*   Item # 16: *It is easier to cheat in an online or hybrid class than in a face-to-face class*, has a mean of 3.54 and a standard deviation of 1.092.

- Item # 17: *It is easier for students to cheat when technology is involved*, e.g., *Blackboard, calculator, laptop computer, etc*., has a mean of 3.54 and a standard deviation of 1.028.
- Item # 22: *It is our responsibility to eliminate as many opportunities to cheat as possible*, has a mean of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 1.042.

More than 50% of the respondents agreed that it is easier for students to cheat in an online or hybrid class (53.72%, item # 16) and when technology such as Blackboard, calculator or laptop computer is involved (58.68%, item #17). However, a little more than 60% of respondents also felt that it is the academia's responsibility to eliminate as many cheating opportunities as possible (item # 22). Consequently, there is sufficient empirical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and to accept the alternate hypothesis that technology plays an important role in student cheating. This finding is consistent with previous research, revealing that students took advantage of technology to download materials from Web sites and to email test answers to each other (Clo, 2002; Etter, et al., 2006; Wilson, 1999). To help minimize cheating opportunities among college students, academia are strongly encouraged to cultivate a culture of trust (Mitchell, 2009) and to review the 10 principles of academic integrity as suggested by McCabe and Pavela (1997).

Proposition 4 Academia's Perception of Student Ethics
6. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia do not believe that ethics is important to college students.
   Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia believe that ethics is important to college students.

Proposition 4 is determined by two items on the survey questionnaire. Item # 9, *I believe that ethics are very important to our students*, has a mean of 3.91 and a standard deviation of 1.072. A large proportion of the respondents (70%) either agree or strongly agree that ethics are very important to their students, as opposed to 30% of the respondents who either disagree, strongly disagree, or chose to remain neutral on this subject. Item # 10, *I hold our students to the same ethical standards that I hold myself to*, has a relatively high mean of 4.34 and a standard deviation of 0.077. Nearly all of the respondents (94%) overwhelming agree or strongly agree that they hold their students to the same ethical standards that they hold themselves to. Consequently, there is strong empirical evidence to reject the null hypothesis and therefore to accept the academia's belief that ethics is important to college students.

Proposition 5 Academic Misconduct
7. Null Hypothesis (H_0): If they caught their students cheating, academia will not file charges against the students.
   Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): If they caught their students cheating, academia will file charges against the students.

Three items on the survey questionnaire were used to evaluate this proposition. In item # 7, *If I caught my student cheating in a class, I would rather that s/he be disciplined by*, respondents were given several choices to handle a cheating incident: University Honor Board (20.7%); Instructor (12.4%); Both University Honor Board and instructor (64.5%); None of the above (0.8%); and Not applicable (1.7%). It is comforting to observe that majority of the respondents (64.5%) want the cheater to be disciplined by both the University Honor Board and the course instructor. One out of five respondents does not want to have anything to do with the cheating situation, while 12% of the respondents prefer to take matters into their own hands.

Item # 14, *If I suspect that our students have violated the Academic Honor Code, I will file charges against them*, yielded a mean of 3.64 and a standard deviation of 0.784. Approximately 62% of the respondents either agree or strongly agree to file charges against students who violated the University

Honor Code, one-third of the respondents chose to remain silent, and a very small percentage (7.44%) would not take any action against the cheater. In contrast, Frost, et al. (2007) discovered that faculty members are more lenient to first-time offenders than second-timers and would personally counsel the first-time cheaters. They also suggested that faculty members must educate students on academic dishonesty awareness and that the university assigns an individual to track cheating incidents.

Item # 15, *I would be more likely to press charges against students I found cheating if the process of filing charges was less complicated,* has a mean of 3.11 and a standard deviation of 1.011. One would expect that more respondents will file charges against the cheater if the filing charges was less complicated, but only one out of three respondents either agree or strongly agree with the statement. Nearly 24% of the respondents either strongly disagree or disagree with the statement, and more surprisingly, 42.15% of the respondents chose to remain neutral on this subject.

A Chi-square test was conducted on two factors – discipline choices and faculty/non-faculty group – at the 0.05 significance level. The results revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between the faculty and the non-faculty group with regard to the discipline choices (Pearson *Chi-Square* value = 10.050, $df = 4$, $p = 0.04$).

Proposition 6 Ethical Environment on Campus

8. Null Hypothesis (H_0): Academia believe that the university did not provide an ethical environment on campus.
   Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): Academia believe that the university did provide an ethical environment on campus.

The ethical environment on campus was measured using the following three items on the survey questionnaire:

- Item # 18: *I consider most of my co-workers to be ethical human being*s, with a mean of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 0.614.
- Item # 19: *I believe that student-athletes tend to cheat more often than non-athlete*s, with a mean of 2.35 and a standard deviation of 0.937.
- Item # 20: *I believe that male students tend to cheat more often than female students*, with a mean of 2.65 and a standard deviation of 0.901.

As illustrated from the statistics for item # 18, an overwhelming 88% of the respondents considered most of their co-workers to be ethical human beings, with a mere 10% of the respondents who chose to remain neutral on this issue. Slightly more than half of the respondents (57%) do not agree that student-athletes tend to cheat more often than non-athletes (item # 19), while 35% of them prefer to remain neutral on this topic. Only 8% of the respondents think that athletes tend to cheat more often than non-athletes. For item # 20, nearly 44% of the respondents either disagree or strongly disagree that male students tend to cheat more often than female students, while nearly 40% of them have no opinion on this question. Only 16% of the respondents either agree or strongly agree with this statement. Based on the statistics for items # 18 – 20, we can conclude that there is sufficient empirical evidence to suggest that the academia believe that the University did provide an ethical environment for all the constituents on campus.

Sources of Ethical Beliefs

In terms of the students' abilities to distinguish between right and wrong, nearly all respondents (98.9%) believe that family upbringing plays the most critical role, followed by personal experience (64.4%), and religion (55.2%) in helping to nurture college students' ethical behaviors. Interestingly, less than half of the respondents (46%) attribute education as a key factor in student ethics. More surprisingly, only slightly more than one-third of the respondents (39%) felt that TV, movies, and media have the least influence on student ethics. Since Americans on the average watch approximately 5 hours of TV a day,

one would assume that TV, movies, and media would have a stronger impact on shaping students' values and morals (Americans Watching More TV Than Ever; Web and Mobile Video Up too, 2011).

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study is to examine the perception of student ethics from the point of view of the academia, which includes faculty, administrators, coaches, and the staff of a university. The study analyzed data collected in a survey on six propositions, which included six sets of hypotheses. An exploratory analysis conducted on the data set revealed several important research findings. Our research produced many interesting findings and gave us a deeper understanding of student ethics from the academia's perspective.

The findings in this study reveal that education does play a big role in teaching students about ethics, and that it is not too late to teach college age students about ethical issues, even though one's early childhood upbringing and family experiences have the biggest impact on the formation of values. Over 80% of the respondents believed that they could help make an impact on the students with whom they come into contact each day.

The respondents believed that a majority of the students in college cheated in high school before coming to the university, and that this pattern continues in college, with many not abiding by the university's honor code. Many believe it is easier to cheat with the advance of technology, but that it is still the responsibility of academia to reduce the opportunities for cheating as much as possible. This will continue to be a challenge in the future as the popularity of online course delivery continues to grow.

Most of the respondents felt that ethics was indeed important to students, and that they should, and did, hold students to the same standards of behavior to which they held for themselves. In that regard, setting an example and modeling desired behavior will continue to be the key factor in successful adoption of a positive ethical culture.

When misconduct does occur, respondents wanted the situation to be handled by both an Honor Board and the faculty member of record. Most respondents stated that they would file charges if misconduct was witnessed, even if the process of filing charges was complicated. This helps to maintain the belief that the University does provide an ethical environment in which most co-workers are considered to be ethical. The fact that a student is also an athlete seems to have no bearing on the tendency to cheat, so the University provides a "level playing field" in that respect.

It is recommended that future research focus on ethical practices of members of academia, and specifically on the faculty, who are the role models with which students come in contact on a continuous basis, and who have direct contact on most ethical issues on campus. It would also be useful to contrast students with faculty regarding the source of values and ethical practice, and what actions faculty would be considered as unethical within their own ranks.

REFERENCES

Americans Watching More TV Than Ever; Web and Mobile Video Up too. (2011). Retrieved from http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/americans-watching-more-tv-than-ever/

Berschback, R. (2011). What new and adjunct faculty need to know about exams, grades, and cheating. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning, 8*(7), 39-51.

Business Accreditation Standards. (2011). Retrieved from http://www.aacsb.edu/accreditation/business/standards/aol/standard15.asp

Clo, K. (2002). When Academic dishonesty happens on your campus. Innovation Abstracts, XXIV(26), Retrieved from
http://www.academicintegrity.org/educational_resources/pdf/WhenAcadDishonestyHappens_K.Clos_XXIV_26.pdf

Comas-Forgas, R., & Sureda-Negre, J. (2010). Academic plagiarism: Explanatory factors from students' perspective. *Journal of Academic Ethics, 8*(3), 217-232. doi:10.1007/s10805-010-9121-0.

Etter, S., Cramer, J., & Finn, S. (2006). Origins of academic dishonesty: Ethical orientations and personality factors associated with attitudes about cheating with information technology. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *39*(2), 133-155.

Friedman, H., Fogel, J., and Friedman, L. (2005). Student perceptions of the ethics of professor. *Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies, 10*(2), 10-15.

Frost, J., Hamlin, A., and Barczyk, C. (2007). A survey of professor reactions to scenarios of academic dishonesty in American universities. *Journal of Business Inquiry*: *Research, Education, and Application*, *6*, 11-18.

Galbraith, D., & Webb, F. (2010). Business ethics: A view from the classroom. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning, 7*(4), 39-52.

Hall, S. (2011). Is it happening? How to avoid the deleterious effects of plagiarism and cheating in your courses. *Business Communication Quarterly*, *74*(2), 179-182.

Keith-Spiegel, P., Tabachnick, B., Whitley, B., and Washburn, J. (1998). Why professors ignore cheating: Opinions of a national sample of psychology instructors. *Ethics & Behavior, 8*(3), 215-227.

Kuther, T. (2003). A profile of the ethical professor. *College Teaching*, *51*(4), 153-160.

Levy, E., and Rakovski, C. (2006). Academic dishonesty: A zero tolerance professor and student registration choices. *Research in Higher Education, 47*(6), 735-754. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11162-006-9013-8

McCabe, D., and Pavela, G (1997). Ten principles of academic integrity. *The Journal of College and University Law*, *24*, 117-118.

McCabe, D., Treviño, L., and Butterfield, K. (2001). Cheating in academic institutions: A decade of research. *Ethics and Behavior*, *11*(3), 219–232.

Mitchell, R. (2009). Ethics in an online environment. *New Directions for Community Colleges*. Winter, 63-70. doi:10.1002/cc.387.

Morgan, B., & Korschgen, A. (2001). The ethics of faculty behavior: Students' and professors' views. *College Student Journal*, *35*(3), 418-422.

Nielsenwire. (2009). Americans watching more TV than ever; web and mobile vdeo up too. Retrieved from http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/americans-watching-more-tv-than-ever/

Papp, R., and Wertz, M. (2009). To pass at any cost: Addressing academic integrity violations. *Journal of Academic and Business Ethics*, *1*, 2-11.

Robie, C., & Kling, J. (2003). The ethics of professorial book selling: Morality, money and 'black market' books. *Journal of Business Ethics, 47*(2), 61-76.

Roig, M., & Marks, A. (2006). Attitudes toward cheating before and after the implementation of a modified honor code: A case study. *Ethics & Behavior, 16*(2), 163-171.

Simkin, M., & McLeod, A. (2010). Why do college students cheat? *Journal of Business Ethics, 94*(3), 441-453. doi:10.1007/s10551-009-0275-x

Smith, K., Davy, J., Rosenberg, D., and Haight, T. (2009). The role of motivation and attitude on cheating among business student. *Journal of Academic and Business Ethics*, *1*, 12-37.

Staats, S., Hupp, J., Wallace, H., & Gresley, J. (2009). Heroes don't cheat: An examination of academic dishonesty and students' views on why professors don't report cheating. *Ethics & Behavior, 19*(3), 171-183. doi:10.1080/10508420802623716.

Styron, J., & Styron, Ronald A, Jr. (2010). Student cheating and alternative Web-based assessment. *Journal of College Teaching & Learning, 7*(5), 37-42.

Wilson, R. (1999, October 15). Colleges urged to better define academic integrity and to stress its importance. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *46*(8), A18.

Yahr, M., Bryan, L., and Schimmel, K. (2009). Perceptions of college and university codes of ethics. *Journal of Academic and Business Ethics*, *2*, 1-10.