

Alhambra High: Where Cheating Thrives

Overt Tactics

1. Post-It Notes/Notes under desk
2. Holding test papers up for others
3. Writing notes on arms, shoes, desks, erasers
4. Looking at test of the person next to you (with or without consent)
5. Asking the person next to you
6. Using "sign language"/mouthing to communicate across the room
7. Writing answers on a water bottle label
8. Texting during class
9. "Going to the restroom" to check textbook or notes

GETTING CREATIVE

1. Stretching a rubber band and writing answers on it
2. Writing on concealed parts of the body, then claiming sexual harassment if the teacher asks to lift skirts or shorts
3. Using a mirror or HD Camera to look at other tests
4. Asking to see teacher's key ahead of time, then recording yourself reading it. Memorize answers
5. Proceeding to turn test in, checking other tests, then claim you forgot to write name. Go back and revise

In this survey, cheating was defined as plagiarism, sharing test questions, copying test answers, etc.

93% of AHS students admitted to witnessing cheating among peers.

87% of teachers feel that cheating is becoming an issue at AHS.

National Statistics

74% of high school students admitted to cheating on an exam in a survey of 12,000 high school students conducted by the Josephson Institute of Ethics in 2011.

80% of high achieving students admitted to cheating.

Cheating is most likely to occur in math and science classes.

In 1940, 20% of college students admitted to cheating.

Today 75-98% of college students admit to cheating each year. It is most likely to happen with business and engineering majors.

CATHERINE CHIANG
Opinions Editor

Temptation is everywhere. It's in the textbooks filled with answers just inches from your feet, the moment your teacher glances the other way, your friend making hand signals across the room. The problem is that many students—too many—choose to take the bait.

Academic dishonesty is nothing new, but it is shocking how prevalent it has become. According to a survey of American high schools, 74% of students have cheated on an exam, and 80% of "high-achieving" students have cheated. This trend is not just a reflection of our nation's ethics. It's a look in the mirror for us at AHS; and here, 93% of students surveyed admit that they have seen peers cheating. In our school, cheating has become a universal crime, an accepted offense. The rare student who doesn't cheat is an anomaly and those who do are simply the norm.

We're told at the beginning of every school year, in every class, that cheating is wrong. We know that cheating is immoral. So why do we do it?

There are all the old excuses: pressure, laziness, desperation. Yet, that doesn't explain how and why cheating is such a pervasive problem in our school.

A better explanation can be found in our school culture. Students cheat, but few are ever caught or reprimanded.

And for those who do experience the consequences, fewer realize how wrong their actions are and continue to be repeat offenders. Perhaps the worst aspect of our cheating culture is that students who cheat can "earn" high GPAs and be at the top of their classes. They can be awarded and praised. They can run for student government offices and win. They can represent the best of us.

Cheating is not just a way for lazy students to get by anymore; it is how "good" students—the ones in Advanced Placement (AP) classes, the ones who want to be competitive and succeed—get ahead.

"Twenty-five years ago, I saw more cheating from students who were just unprepared. Now, I see more students cheating as a result of competition to get into prestigious colleges," Coach Lou Torres said.

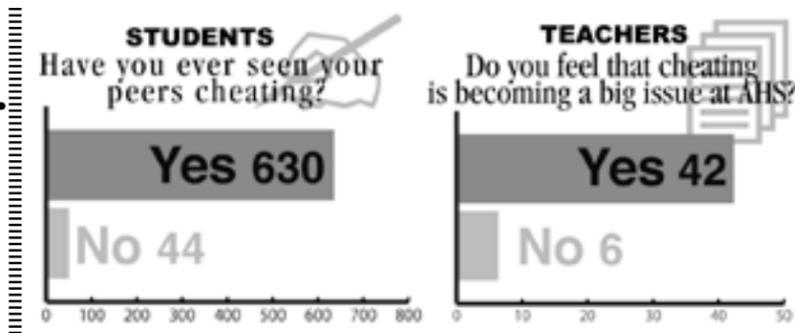
And more disturbingly, many dishonest students do go on to big-name universities and highly respected colleges.

That message—that cheating is an acceptable way to the top, that those who cheat deserve what they gain from it—only worsens the further

deteriorating integrity of our school. When students not only get away with dishonest behavior but are viewed as good students worthy of praise, this kind of unethical conduct perpetuates.

Not every student at AHS cheats and not every high-achiever is guilty of academic dishonesty. However, the fact that the students who take the easy way out are given the opportunity to represent the rest of this school, whether by participating in leadership, ranking highly in their class or attending prestigious colleges after graduation, shows the student body that integrity is not a factor in success. It feeds the attitude of achieving, no matter the cost and it maintains the assumption that cheating is how to get ahead.

We shouldn't be complacent with this behavior and culture on campus. Quite frankly, we're better than this; we shouldn't need to sacrifice integrity in order to "succeed." After all, it's not just your grades and the name on your college sweater that defines who you are; it's also how you earned your success. It's your character.



LILY HAWKINS



Daisy Prom

Opinions Editor

The Bachelorette: College Edition

Sifting through colleges, I set myself up for disappointment with my visionary standards. This school has too many kidnappings and that school doesn't offer my major; as I search through student review websites, I see myself next to the smiling students in the photos of the campuses, trying to picture my new home.

With college-app deadlines having just passed, I wait the two to three months with my anxiety gnawing on my insides and a rally of questions. What if the information on the brochures were only enough to seduce the scholar in me but not enough to evoke passion? What if everything was perfect except for its lack of Quidditch? What if the school vision or motto differed from my own vision by a word? And then there were the worries of whether or not I would ever find another group of people who would appreciate my sense of humor.

The worst part is, despite thorough research, I might still end up in a place that is less than perfect for me. Having to judge a school through brief campus visits felt much to me like having to pick a suitor based on a single night of speed-dating. The fact that I don't know exactly what's going to happen is what scares me the most.

But after months of spontaneous hyperventilating, I know that the most assuring thing about my future is my ability to absorb it all with a deep breath. I've done my standardized test of choice, my A-G's, my college research, my overly revealing essays. No amount of catalogs or tarot card readings could ever prepare me for the culture-shocking experience, but maybe that's the way it has to be with life: learning how to adapt to strange, new places with new people is part of the college experience and to fear it rather than to embrace it would be foolish.

Refusing to be content with a nearly perfect university will only dampen this exciting, new chapter in my life. If I set myself up for disaster, then no one will get to enjoy those four years of promised enlightenment and shenanigans.

For now I have to trust that my hard work and my ability to fall in love with a place for its food will keep me content wherever I end up.

MOOR VS. MOOR: Is the police action against the Occupy UC Davis protestors justified?

The Occupy Wall Street protests have swept the nation, inspiring protests in cities across America and college campuses. At the University of California, Davis, police officers pepper sprayed students, making us wonder how far is too far when it comes to the police's use of force.

Police brutality should never be condoned; however, the pepper spraying incident at UC Davis is anything but. Students have a First Amendment right to free speech, but not the right to trespass on government property and set up legions of hobo camps.

These protestors were disruptive to the learning environment and placed school administrators in the difficult position of doing what was best to protect the safety of their students, even if that meant forcefully removing those who did not comply.

Lieutenant John Pike, the police officer who administered the pepper spray, warned them of his actions, and they chose to ignore him. In fact, the protestors were fortunate that Lt. Pike chose to pepper spray them rather than having them physically pried apart which would have put them at risk of injuries.

To many, siding with the students who appear to be peacefully protesting against the raise in tuition may be morally satisfying. However, many overlook the fact that the officers had given the protestors many opportunities to avoid punishment. In other words, the protestors were warned and knew exactly what was going to happen if they did not comply.

Pepper spray really comes in handy whenever you want something. Whether it would be combating a Black Friday crowd for an X-box or a serial sociopath for your life, this weapon is precious.

On the other hand, one should consider if it would make any sense to use pepper spray against innocent, virtuous human beings who simply have a right to power—certainly not.

The students at the Nov. 28 protest at UC Davis were unethically treated by the police when they were pepper sprayed. In a scenario where students cause violence, such measures would be necessary. However, they were peaceful demonstrators.

It is the students' fundamental right to protest rising tuition. Their livelihoods and education, as well as those of future incoming students, are threatened.

Although the protest was disruptive to an orderly academic setting and even discomforted a few administrators and uniformed individuals, this provocation is the purpose of civil disobedience.

The bottom line is that the students pay the greater price. The intention to mute students' voices does not justify even the most minor police force.



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