

Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility Resource Guide

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All materials produced by members of the California State University, Northridge Core Commitments Personal and Social Responsibility Initiative Writing Team and affiliated instructors.

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Academic Dishonesty: Definitions and Penalties

From the CSUN Catalogue on Academic conduct -

E-2. Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism

Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, or work of another as one's own in any academic exercise. Comments:

1. Direct Quotations: Every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks, or by appropriate indentation or by other means of identification, and must be promptly cited in a footnote. Proper footnote style for any academic department is outlined by the MLA Style Sheet or K. L. Turbian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations. These and similar publications are available in the Matador Bookstore and at the reference desk of the Oviatt Library.
2. Paraphrase: Prompt acknowledgment is required when material from another source is paraphrased or summarized in whole or in part in your own words. To acknowledge a paraphrase properly, one might state: "to paraphrase Locke's comment..." and conclude with a footnote identifying the exact reference. A footnote acknowledging only a directly quoted statement does not suffice to notify the reader of any preceding or succeeding paraphrased material.
3. Borrowed Facts or Information: Information obtained in one's reading or research which is not common knowledge among students in the course must be acknowledged. Examples of common knowledge might include the names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, etc.

Materials which contribute only to one's general understanding of the subject may be acknowledged in the bibliography and need not be immediately footnoted. One footnote is usually sufficient to acknowledge indebtedness when a number of connected sentences in the paper draw their special information from one source. When direct quotations are used, however, quotation marks must be inserted and prompt acknowledgment is required.

E.4 Penalties for Academic Dishonesty

Pursuant to CSU Executive Order 969, all actions taken by faculty based on student academic dishonesty, including the imposition of a grade penalty, must be reported to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Disciplinary records of any action of academic dishonesty are retained in the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. These records may be available to prospective employers and other educational institutions, in accordance with federal and state regulations. In short, a student committing any act of academic dishonesty will run a serious risk of harming his or her future education or employment opportunities.

Students wishing to report an act of academic dishonesty should call (818) 677-2391 and ask for the Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, who will investigate such reports. Information may be provided anonymously; disciplinary action, however, cannot be taken on the basis of anonymous reports alone.

Plagiarism and Sample Syllabus Language

Core Commitments

Some of the topics we will cover in this class reflect the university's commitment to standing for and teaching core values of personal and social responsibility. You will be asked to reflect on such values as respecting the views and well being of others, recognizing your obligations as a member of the academic community, and fulfilling your role as a participant in the larger communities —local, national, and global— to which you belong.

Academic integrity

This is a class that has a core commitment to personal integrity: there is zero tolerance for academic dishonesty. Do your own work. You'll be happy with yourself that you did and you will participate in an honest and trustworthy community that we create together in this classroom.

Academic integrity

I take violations of academic integrity very seriously. I do not simply give 'F's' for such violations; I refer any and all suspected violations of academic integrity to the dean for judicial affairs. If you have any questions about what counts as a violation of academic integrity, please consult the Student Conduct Code, or simply ask me.

Class conduct

All class-related conduct must be in accordance with the Student Conduct Code. In addition, in order to make sure that everyone gets a chance to speak, only one person may speak at a time and only when called on. That is, no student shall interrupt another student who has the floor. All conduct must be civil and in the spirit of joint discovery. In the event of seriously uncivil or disorderly conduct, I will stop the class and ask the offending parties to leave for the day. I will not resume class until they leave; anyone who leaves before the end of the class period in such an event will be counted as absent. The offending parties will be counted as absent for the day and their participation grade will be seriously impacted.

Link to student conduct code section: <http://www.csun.edu/catalog/appendices.html#E1>

Sample contractual appendix to syllabus

Please read and initial each of the following statements.

_____ I have read and understand the syllabus for this course. I understand all of the course requirements and policies. I understand that it is my responsibility to seek clarification of any requirement or policy as soon as the need arises.

_____ I agree to abide by all course policies.

_____ I understand that plagiarism is unethical and a serious offense. I understand that it is solely my responsibility to seek clarification on what counts as plagiarism. I understand that any of my work suspected of plagiarism will be referred to the Office of Student Affairs, and that I will be subject to sanction as provided for in the Code of Student Conduct.

_____ All assignments I shall submit in this course will be solely my own work.

Signature:

Date:

Personal Responsibility: Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating culture

“According to a recent survey by the Josephson Institute, 43 percent of high school students agreed that a person has to ‘lie and cheat sometimes in order to succeed.’”ⁱ What in today’s culture leads people to think and act this way? Discuss at length.

Witness to cheating

If you saw a classmate cheating on an exam what would you do and why? Discuss and explain your reasons.

What kind of college community are you interested in belonging to?

In “a 2004 survey of almost 25,000 high school students... 62% admitted cheating on a test.” Moreover, recent surveys suggest that the problem has grown on college campuses.ⁱⁱ Why do you think the problem of academic dishonesty has grown, and is this the culture of academic dishonesty one that you want to belong to? Drawing from your personal experiences and beliefs, explain by using concrete details and examples so that your reader’s can follow your reasoning clearly and logically.

Sanctions for cheating

How did teachers and administrators deal with cheating in your high school? How should professors and administrators in college deal with cheating?

Advice to your roommate

Imagine that your roommate has an essay due on Monday morning. It is Sunday night, and he or she has not started the paper and goes online, finds an article that meets the assignment, and uses sections of the essay without using quotation marks or giving credit to the author. Before turning in the essay, your roommate has second thoughts about giving it to the professor and asks for your advice.

What advice would you give your roommate? Discuss at length and give an explanation for your position.

Justifications for cheating?

Is cheating ever justified in college because of a personal or family situation? Why? Explain your answer.

Consider the consequences

If students cheat in college, could this behavior have any consequences in the professional world they will enter when they graduate? What kind(s) of job(s) do you want to have when you finish college? What might the consequences of cheating be in these jobs? Be certain to answer each of the items listed below and provide specific details for the readers of your essay in explaining your reasoning.

1. Consequences for you?
2. Consequences for your co-workers?
3. Consequences for the company that employs you?
4. Consequences for society as a whole?

“It’s All Good”: A Disturbing Trend in Academic Culture

“According to a recent survey by the Josephson Institute, 43 percent of high school students agreed that a person has to ‘lie and cheat sometimes in order to succeed.’ⁱⁱⁱ What we are witnessing is an apparent paradigm shift in which a culture of academic dishonesty has seemingly taken root and is now being encouraged while people turn their heads, looking the other way, in excusing what previous generations simply would not have tolerated or condoned.

What in today’s society leads people to think and act this way? Discuss at length.

Multiple submissions

In your writing class, the instructor has discussed a definition of academic dishonesty. It includes the statement that turning in a paper in one class that was previously submitted for another class is plagiarism. This, to your classmate, is a ridiculous idea. This student plans to use a high school paper on gun control for her research paper in the class and assures you that it will not even be noticed—and, anyway, the writing is after all her own.

What advice would you give your classmate? Does she have a good point? What other points should she consider before turning in the paper?

How problematic is lying to instructors?

In a report issued by the Josephson Institute of Ethics, it was found that ‘the percentage of [high school] students who admit lying to their teachers two or more times increased from 53% in 1992 to 63% in 2002.’^{iv} A big increase—but still less than students lie to their parents.

In your experience, is lying to instructors or administrators a common problem? A serious one? Is there ever any circumstance—some emergency or family necessity—where it would be justified? If your degree were at risk, would it be okay to put the wrong date on a document?

Misreporting community service

Your class has been required to do community service—a requirement many of the students object to. One student in particular, a young parent with a demanding work schedule, has complained in private that there is just no time. You both volunteer at the same site, and after the supervisor signs the form that says you have worked 2 hours, you see your classmate change the figure to 12 hours. Now you also have credit for 10 hours of work you didn't do.

What should you do? If your friend refuses to come forward, what then?

Social Responsibility: On campus

Class climate

Your instructor explains that he/she wants to encourage an atmosphere of open and friendly discussion in class. Before the initial discussion, you are asked to make a list of all the rights and rules that class members should be guided by in their interaction. Write an essay explaining what are the qualities of a good discussion. What do you think are the most important responsibilities students have toward each other in class discussions? What should the instructor do to encourage mutual respect and make sure no one dominates?

Group work

Your instructor has organized the class into groups, given you a group project, and told you that the group may divide up the responsibilities in any way that all the members can agree upon. Your group has divided the work evenly. But as the project goes on, one member—a student who arrived in the United States only four years ago—is not producing work that members of your group think is as good as theirs. You receive an email from the others, asking you whether it is okay to replace the one student's work, put everyone's names on the project, and turn it in without informing the weaker student of the changes.

How would you respond? What issues—for example, honesty or fairness—are involved? What consideration does the weaker student deserve in this situation?

Retroactive expulsion

This year Ohio University took away the degree in engineering that it had previously awarded to a former student when it was accidentally discovered that the student had deliberately plagiarized part of his thesis. Over 200 graduate theses were then checked by computer to see if other instances of cheating could be found. A few students who made mistakes in documentation were required to rewrite parts of their theses.

Was the university's decision to strip the student of his degree (and thereby his career) a good one or was it too harsh? What should happen to the faculty members who signed off on it? How will this decision affect current students? Future students? Companies that hire engineers?

“It's All Good”: A Disturbing Trend in Academic Culture

“The percentage of students who copied from another student during tests grew from 26 percent in 1963 to 52 percent in 1993, and the use of crib notes during exams went from 6 percent to 27 percent, according to a study conducted by Dr. Donald McCabe of

Rutgers. By the mid-1990s, only a small minority said they had never cheated, meaning that cheating had become part of the acceptable status quo. Dr. McCabe's later national survey of 25,000 high school students from 2001 to 2008 yielded equally depressing results: more than 90 percent said they had cheated in one way or another.

The fact that so many students cheat doesn't make them intrinsically bad, he says: "It's not a case of the bad seed. It's more like bad soil. The biggest determinant is not the values that students are exposed to at home, but peer norms at school. Students are under pressure to achieve high grade-point averages, which helps them rationalize their behavior. And the schools themselves are complicit, because they reward high grades more than the process of learning — while too often turning a blind eye to the cheating.

But there's hope. The 1993 study suggested that cheating dropped in schools that encouraged a culture of integrity — either by formally instituting an honor code or by stressing at every turn the importance of honesty and integrity. A follow-up study showed that dishonest business behavior was lowest among employees who had attended schools with an honor code and whose workplaces encouraged ethical behavior.” (Maura J. Casey, Editorial Observer, “Digging Out Roots of Cheating in High School,” New York Times, October 13, 2008)

“According to a recent survey by the Josephson Institute, 43 percent of high school students agreed that a person has to ‘lie and cheat sometimes in order to succeed’” (“Building Character,” 148). What we are witnessing is an apparent paradigm shift in which a culture of academic dishonesty has seemingly taken root and is now being encouraged while people turn their heads, looking the other way, in excusing what previous generations simply would not have tolerated or condoned.

- What in today’s society leads people to think and act this way? Discuss at length in a logical, well-organized and developed essay using specific, concrete details, examples and illustrations.

Bad Soil? – Reflections on a Culture of Academic Dishonesty

“Surveys show that cheating in school — plagiarism, forbidden collaboration on assignments, copying homework and cheating on exams — has soared since researchers first measured the phenomenon on a broad scale at 99 colleges in the mid-1960s. The percentage of students who copied from another student during tests grew from 26 percent in 1963 to 52 percent in 1993, and the use of crib notes during exams went from 6 percent to 27 percent, according to a study conducted by Dr. Donald McCabe of Rutgers.

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The challenge is daunting. Students of both genders and every demographic group cheat even though they know it is wrong, a mind-set Dr. Jason Stephens from the University of Connecticut describes as "a corrosive force" — especially when it is acquired in the early years of moral development. The fact that so many students cheat doesn't make them intrinsically bad, he says: "It's not a case of the bad seed. It's more like bad soil." (Maura J. Casey, "Digging Out the Roots of Cheating in High School," NY Times, October 13, 2008)

- Why do you think the problem of academic dishonesty has grown, and is this the culture of academic dishonesty one that you want to belong to? Drawing from your personal experiences and beliefs, explain by using concrete details and examples so that your readers can follow your reasoning clearly and logically.

When You Think About the Consequences

"Surveys show that cheating in school — plagiarism, forbidden collaboration on assignments, copying homework and cheating on exams — has soared since researchers first measured the phenomenon on a broad scale at 99 colleges in the mid-1960s. The percentage of students who copied from another student during tests grew from 26 percent in 1963 to 52 percent in 1993, and the use of crib notes during exams went from 6 percent to 27 percent, according to a study conducted by Dr. Donald McCabe of Rutgers.

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- If students cheat in college, could this behavior have any consequences in the professional world they will enter when they graduate? What kind(s) of job(s) do you want to have when you finish college? What might the consequences of cheating be in these jobs? Be certain to answer each of the items listed below and provide specific details for the readers of your essay in explaining your reasoning.
 - a. For you?
 - b. For your co-workers?
 - c. For the company that employs you?
 - d. For society as a whole?

Social Responsibility: Beyond the campus

Shared space

Two employees—one on the morning shift, the other working in the afternoon—share a single cubicle. Many clients consult with the employees in the cubicle during the course of business. The afternoon employee brings more and more items to decorate: personal photos, small posters with slogans that the morning employee doesn't agree with, and other objects left on the desktop. The morning employee complains and the boss orders the two to work it out.

How should the two employees solve this? What rights does each one have? What principles about sharing and respect for others apply?

Presumption among friends

You move into a new apartment with three of your good friends. One of your new roommates goes out and purchases a few hundred dollars of essentials—tables, chairs, dish towels, toilet paper, et cetera. She then requests that each of you split the cost of the furnishings. Though she never consulted any of you, you all agree that all of the items are necessary and are things you would have had to buy eventually. Nonetheless, did she do anything wrong? For example, was she presumptuous in any objectionable way?

Decisions about the environment

“We live in a unique time, where the decisions of this generation may very well dictate the health of the planet for this and future generations. The impact of these decisions will affect the quality of life across the globe” (U.S. Partnership for Education). You've been asked to make one decision about the environment that would improve the quality of life now without damaging the planet in the future, what would it be? Be specific and explain.

Mistreatment of the environment

When you think of all the thoughtless ways that people treat the environment, which one upsets you the most? Why? What resolution would you recommend?

Concern for the environment

“To meet the immense challenges of the present and the future, it is important that all” college students should be concerned about their environment (U.S. Partnership for

Education). In your day-to-day life or those of your friends, what is the most wasteful habit you have observed about yourself and/or others? Elaborate.

Whose problem is it?

Is the environment your problem? Why or why not?

Conflicting duties

Your friend from high school, a honors student who is living away from home for the first time, has gotten into some bad habits—drinking excessively, skipping class, disappearing for long stretches of time— things that she never would have done before. When your friend’s concerned parents have called in the past, you simply said that your friend was ‘busy’ (rather than ‘drunk’ or ‘missing’). But when you answer the phone today, you’re tempted to tell them everything.

What’s the right thing to do? What’s the proper role of a friend—to talk with the parents? To take other action? How can you decide what is interfering and what is your responsibility?

Breaking free^y

Many students arrive at CSUN hoping to begin a “new life”---a life beyond the confines and influences of their high schools and residential neighborhoods. However, after a week or so, many students, for a variety of reasons, find that these “ties” cannot be so easily broken. In some cases, the ties remain as strong as ever: for economic, social, and relationship reasons. The nature of these ties can be positive or negative. Positive ties are usually those that involve nurturing interaction with family, friends, acquaintances, and church membership. Negative ties, on the other hand, may involve friends, acquaintances, and “locations” that tend to produce trouble at every turn. Either way, the ties raise the question of what should be the level of involvement between college students and the neighborhoods many of them leave behind to attend institutions of higher education. This includes those students, living on campus, who invite “friends” from their old neighborhoods to the campus who bring all kinds of personal baggage, causing all manner of problems to innocent, unknowing others when they do.

In a thoughtful, well-organized and well-developed essay with a clear thesis statement:

- Identify an individual (including yourself), from your high school years, who was harmed or motivated because he or she was unable to break free of “influences” from the neighborhood.
- Discuss the merits of CSUN implementing a requirement that students live on campus during their freshmen and sophomore years. Positive? Negative? Why/how? In what ways? Be sure to provide reasons and examples where warranted;

- Discuss the impact this requirement would have on students. Again, provide reasons, specific details, and examples where warranted.

“Here Today, Gone Today!”^{vi}

July 4, 1990, started off as a happy day for Voddie Baucham. He awoke at 8:00 am, to prepare for a day of fun and food at his friend's house. At 10:00, he and several other friends arrived at 1576 N. Evergreen Ave. (Los Angeles), to prepare the steaks, chicken, and links to be barbecued. The early morning taunts, jokes, and laughter suggested a day of gaiety, reminiscing, and fable-telling. However, at 12:15 pm, Voddie lay dead in the front lawn—a victim of a drive-by shooting. Eric, a neighbor, speaking to no one in particular, said, "Damn! That's how it is sometimes—here today, gone tomorrow." Frank, a long time close friend of Voddie, looked at Eric and said, somberly, "No, man—sometimes, it's here today, gone today!"

During the past nine months, at least 4 students associated with CSUN's Pan African Studies Program have been shot and killed. Their deaths remind many of the PAS instructors of Frank's statement of "here today, gone today," because interactions with the students seem as if they were "just today." At least two of these students were victims of "drive-by" shooting; victims of what may be termed "being at the wrong place at the wrong time." The other shootings may have represented individuals who, though living in a "safe" place to attend college, continued to have close ties with their former neighborhoods. However, all four killings represent talented young people cut-down in "the prime" of their lives. They raise the question of what should be the level of involvement between college students and the neighborhoods that many of them leave behind to attend institutions of higher education?

In a well-developed essay:

- **Identify** an individual who left the neighborhood of his/her youth to attend a college or university but was unable to completely "cut ties" with the neighborhood. Be sure to indicate how you know this individual, reasons for his/her being unable to break these ties, high schools and college, and potential as a student in higher education;
- **Discuss** the consequences of the inability/failure to sever these ties—negative and/or positive; and lastly,
- **Explain** what lessons you learned from this experience, and how these lessons will benefit your future as a college student.

When Does It End?^{vii}

Not a week passes that one doesn't hear about somebody falling victim to random, indiscriminate gang violence. That "somebody" no longer need be a gang member. All too often, those who were victimized had very little if anything at all to do with street gangs. They might have been adults coming home from work, driving down the freeway. They might have stopped at a service station for gasoline, or been out with their families

when they took a wrong turn into a gang-infested neighborhood. They might have been a little girl at play in her neighborhood who “accidentally” crossed the line dividing one gang from another, hit by a “stray” bullet. Or, the victim could have been a home having dinner with the rest of the family when a random bullet pierced a wall and took a life, showing the hollowness of the saying “In the wrong place at the wrong time” for if you cannot be safe in your home, then where can you hope to be safe?

Now, the shadow of violence has crept on college campuses as well. We find an increase in robberies, rapes and, yes, gun-related incidents as well where college students have been threatened and victimized. This is not limited to campuses like a Virginia Tech. CSUN has not been exempt from any of the above. Consider that you are being given an opportunity to speak out concerning the issue of violence on the campus in an effort to curb the problem before it gets out of hand. Based upon your own experiences and observations, write a well-organized and developed essay in which you do the following:

- **Identify** an individual who left the neighborhood of his/her youth to attend a college or university but was unable to completely "cut ties" with the neighborhood. Be sure to indicate how you know this individual, reasons for his/her being unable to break these ties, high schools and college, and potential as a student in higher education;
- **Discuss** the consequences of the inability/failure to cut off these ties—negative and/or positive; and lastly,
- **Explain** what lessons you learned from this experience, and how these lessons will benefit your future as a college student. IN closing, what recommendation(s) would you make to CSUN that might help contribute to a decrease in violence and establish a true climate of safety and learning for all.

Time to Represent and Show What You Truly Stand For

The months leading up to that moment when Sen. Barack Hussein Obama accumulated the delegates needed to secure the Democratic Party nomination as its candidate for President of the United States were highly contested and filled with drama. With the concession of Sen. Hilary Clinton to Obama, one might have thought the contest was over. However, the Republican Party effort led by Sen. John McCain has only brought added controversy to what is already a history-making milestone in American and world history. More recently, both Presidential candidates appeared with evangelist Rick Warren to speak about the moral crises each faced in their own lives, i.e., with Obama speaking of selfishness while McCain pointed to a failed first marriage. Based upon your own observations and/or reading, write a logical, well-organized and developed essay in which you:

- **Describe** what you consider to be the most important trait or characteristic a Presidential candidate must have regardless of their race, gender, class, or religious background. Be very vivid in describing that character trait for your readers.

- Reflecting on the current Presidential campaign, **identify** and **discuss** what you see as the three (3) most important issues or concerns facing America. Be specific in your discussion of these issues as you point out why they are important. And finally,
- As you think about the proverb foreshadowing this prompt – “He who stands for nothing will fall for everything.” – in light of this Presidential campaign and the quality or qualities you believe the next President of the United States must have in meeting those major issues, **state** why you believe it is essential for all Americans, especially those of your generation, to not only vote on November 4th, but to be informed when you do so.

Some of the Best Lessons Are Not in the Books

- **Describe** a situation when the failure by you, or someone close to you, to exercise responsible management of your finances caused unnecessary financial harm and stress. Be vivid with your description so as to give readers a very clear word picture of the situation.
- **Identify** and **discuss** the reasons leading up to that moment of financial crisis and emotional stress. Use specific, concrete examples and details in developing this portion of your essay.
- And lastly, as you think about the proverb foreshadowing this prompt – “A bargain is something you don't need at a price you can't resist.” – **state** whether you agree or disagree with it. **Show** how learning from the situation described in the beginning of this essay has influenced your thinking and habits where sound debt management is called for. **Conclude** by stating what you would recommend others learn from this situation as well.

Gas Crisis or Gas Hype?

Everyone is concerned about the increase in gas prices over the last 12 months, to the point where gasoline prices today average more than a dollar over what they were in 2007. The concern is not without good reason, for there is no evidence of a gasoline shortage. Still, those who depend upon public transportation are looking at increased bus and train fares to the point where life-altering decisions now have to be made between riding the bus or train where one's livelihood is concerned, e.g., as a student, a worker, perhaps a parent of low income who has to take a child to the clinic or hospital and must decide between traveling across town and not having money for food that evening. Those with cars are affected just as much, with many now seeing their so-called economy cars now costing \$60 and more to fill up, or letting their SUVs remain parked rather than pay the \$100 to gas the vehicle. The most recent newspaper headlines trumpet the fact that Americans drove 12 million fewer miles in July than they did last year. Drawing from your own personal experience and/or observation, write a well-organized and developed essay in which you

- **Describe** a moment in time recently when you found yourself spending more than ever before simply to fill your car's gas tank, or the tank of someone close, as a direct result of the increase in the costs of gasoline over the past 12 months. Be descriptive in giving readers the details of that time – where you were, how much you had to spend, the changes you had to make in your plans as a result and what that gas increase did to any plans you had?
- **Identify** and **discuss** the reasons leading up to that moment you described. Was this inconvenience the result of not planning ahead for a gas increase, or were there other, unexpected, uncontrollable factors involved? Use specific details, examples and illustrations in developing this portion of your narrative.
- And lastly, as you think about the proverb foreshadowing this writing prompt -- “Look after the pennies and the dollars will look after themselves.” – coupled with the increased cost of gasoline and other oil products, **indicate** what steps are you taking to assure not being faced with another decision where the choice is between filling your gas tank using money that could be put to better use elsewhere? **Conclude** by pointing out what others can learn from your experience.

Voting

Voting

This November, U.S. voters will make a historic choice when they vote for the next president: one that will deeply influence our economy, foreign policy, health care, environment, and many other issues for decades to come. Yet many voters approach this decision armed only with what they can learn from advertisements or late-night comedy shows. They may know even less about the many important races and ballot measures that will also be decided in November. Your roommate, an avid news reader who volunteers for his/her political party, explodes in frustration one day, saying that people who don't know or care about the issues shouldn't have an equal vote with people who have taken the time to read the voter information mailings, visit the candidates' web sites, and think through the issues. Does your roommate have a point?

Write an essay in which you describe what would be the ideal for participation in a democracy—including but not limited to responsible voting. Then identify the things that keep you and/or people you know from taking on these responsibilities consistently. Finally, explain how society can encourage active and well-informed citizenship, especially among college students.

Voting

Every U.S. citizen 18 and older has a right to vote.

1. You now have an opportunity to discuss your views on voting.
Consider the following points:
 - A. Why is it important to exercise your right to vote?
 - B. What is the best way to learn about a candidate's position on his/her policies?
 - C. Can the populace depend on television and radio to inform the public about political candidates in a balanced and fair manner?
 - D. Should citizens seek other avenues for information about candidates, such as local newspapers, and/or national magazines and journals?
2. Conclude by explaining why an individual makes a better choice after he/she learns about candidates' experiences and policy positions.

Debt

Debt

Monica, a junior majoring in engineering, comes from a low-income family. She has been struggling to pay for tuition, personal expenses, transportation, etc., but has made good academic progress and with a minimum of student loan debt. However, this fall she has discovered that with high gas prices, increased textbook costs, a university fee hike, and a noticeable downturn in her family's small business income, she is not able to meet her projected budget. She will need to decide between taking out a much larger loan in order to continue her full-time progress toward her degree and cutting back on classes and working more hours at her parents' store—something they are urging her to do.

Write an essay in which you describe how the current economic downturn affects students. Then identify and discuss the factors that a student like Monica should take into account in making her decisions: what should her priorities be? Is her family giving her good advice? Finally, reflect on what, if anything, the university should do to support low-income students in an economic downturn, perhaps in terms of providing increased loans or low cost transportation.

Debt

Research shows that college students are “targeted, indeed, bombarded by credit card company solicitations, in the mail, on the phone and while they are walking across campus,” according to Christine Lindstrom, a representative of the U.S. Public Interest Research Group. The average college student has 4 credit cards and carries over \$2,000 in credit card debt—that is, not counting other forms of debt, such as student loans. Credit card companies are often portrayed as cynical, even predatory, taking advantage of young people with offers of T-Shirts or free food. Yet credit cards are very handy things to have, and many students use them responsibly.

Your best friend confides that, during the first year of college, he/she has accumulated over \$7,000 in credit card debt and is worried about what to do. One idea is quitting school (at least temporarily) to work full time as a cashier in a department store. But then, your friend reflects, it will be easier to make money after graduation; maybe making the minimum payments and staying in school is best. Your friend asks for your advice. Is it best to get out from under the 22% APR payments as soon as possible? Are there any other options your friend might have?

Write an essay in which you describe the problem of “consumer” debt in college, using specific examples. Explain the steps your friend should take, the reasons these steps should be taken, and conclude with a reflection on whether this situation is the fault of your friend or if the credit card companies have a share in the guilt.

Debt

The Poor Economy Hits Students Hard

Tuition continues to rise, gas prices creep higher and higher, jobs are scarce, yet students have to get to school and complete their education so their economic status will improve. With these pressing demands students often depend on credit cards to help them through a financial crunch.

- Explain your personal economic circumstances.
- What creative options can you arrange to prepare for these difficult challenges so you can continue in school without accruing excessive credit card debt?
- Take some time to reflect on a plan that will work for you given your personal situation.

Money Management

Budget/Time management

1. Your supervisor at work offers you ten more hours a week to add to the 20 you are already working. You are taking 15 units and, while accepting the hours would help you afford to get to school and attend classes, the extra hours would interfere with the study time you've allocated. What do you do? What factors should you consider when making this decision? What are the potential consequences of adding work hours to your schedule?

Budget

2. You have enrolled in a class that requires a very expensive textbook, one that costs more than \$100.00. Two friends suggest that you pool your available funds to buy one copy of the course textbook and share it. While this would involve a considerable savings, you are hesitating. What are the pros and cons of such a "collective?" What sorts of issues would affect your decision about this collaboration?

Budget

3. You are an acknowledged note-taker and generally do well in large GE lecture classes. A friend jokingly suggests that you should sell your notes to people who don't come to class. You can certainly use the extra money because you cannot work any additional hours (although taking notes to sell is, after all work; think about what it would entail), and you are even beginning to worry about the cost of your commute. What would you do? What ethical problems if any do you see in engaging in this enterprise?

Budget

4. You are planning to teach high school biology and are enrolled in the first course in the major. The text books for this class cost you almost \$200.00 and you've read that the bookstore will buy them back for almost \$100. That \$100. Would buy you gasoline for finals week, and perhaps a little more, but you'd need to figure out what to do about the final exam which promises to have exxay questions tied to the last three chapters, which you were to read, but hadn't had the chance to. What do you do? What issues would be involved in your decision?

Materials for Discussion Amongst Faculty

1. What is my definition of academic independence and how can I use this as a tool to promote a community more conducive to learning personal and social responsibility in my classroom?
2. How much time do I give to reflective responses from students beyond the presenting of material or assignments, or the grading of their papers and exams?
3. Do I provide enough classroom time for diverse opinions to emerge in class?
4. Is my classroom a safe and respectful space for students to express themselves?
5. How do I encourage the use of more critical thinking tools in class?
6. Do I provide students with new material that challenges them and myself as active members in an ever-changing community, or do I teach what I know again and again?
7. Am I willing to go off of the syllabus to discuss issues of significant, present, or immediate importance (e.g., Hurricane Katrina, 9/11, or Virginia Tech)?
8. Do I provide a rubric that provides a structural template with a series of what is expected and a value clarification so that my grading and commenting is transparent?
9. Do I encourage students to make use of campus activities that encourage their development as citizens of the university community, along with their classroom learning (e.g., Speak Your Mind events, Center for Ethics and Values presentations, the Art Gallery, Music and Theater productions, or the Pow Wow)?
10. What kind of listener am I?
11. If I was going to present a successful workshop on Personal and Social Responsibility for faculty (or for students), what would it look like?
12. What do we mean by liberal education?
13. What causes you to know something? How do you implement that as a teacher?
14. If there was a class on global learning, what would it be like?
15. Is student learning the same as student development? How can we as teachers foster development?

16. How do we think of our students?
17. How can we structure opportunities for our students that allow them to think deliberately and act both individually and collectively in responsible ways?
18. What opportunities do faculty have to continue their education?

Additional Resources

CSUN Student Code on Academic Dishonesty

<http://www.csun.edu/~vcspc00g/303/achonesty.html>

Core Commitments at CSUN

www.csun.edu/corecommitments

Web resources

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

ⁱ (“Building Character” 148

ⁱⁱ “Building Character,” 148

ⁱⁱⁱ “Building Character,” 148

^{iv} REF

^v [PAS S08]

^{vi} [PAS 155 S08]

^{vii} [PAS 097 S08]