

# Memo

**To:** Faculty and Instructors  
**From:** Margaret L. Usdansky, Director, Center for Learning and Student Success  
**Date:** August 19, 2019  
**Re:** Why You Are The Key Messenger – Throughout the Semester

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Each fall, we hear from faculty who would like our staff members to visit their classes to discuss academic integrity. The request is understandable. We want new students to appreciate the value we place on academic integrity at SU. And the Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS), located on the lower level of Bird Library, oversees academic integrity education and case administration in collaboration with the schools and colleges.

But while this approach is intuitive, I am skeptical that it is effective – for two reasons.

First, few, if any, students who enroll in our Schools and Colleges do so with a plan to violate the University's academic integrity policy. Indeed, the error too many students make is assuming that good initial intentions suffice when it comes to avoiding any violation. Why tune in for a message about meeting academic integrity expectations when you're confident a violation won't happen to you?

Second, orientation programming can be overwhelming. It spans multiple "must know" topics and takes place before or as classes begin – several weeks in advance of the build up to midterm exam and assignment pressures that present hurdles for many new students.

So while our staff will continue to make as many presentations as possible at the beginning of each new year, I ask you to consider a more personalized, small-dose approach instead or in addition to the orientation lecture: Customize our materials for your classes and use them incrementally, introducing discussion of key elements of academic integrity where and when they fit your teaching objectives and assignments and thus are most likely to resonate with students.

To this end, we are providing faculty and instructors with a set of materials aimed at engaging students in discussion of academic integrity. This initiative deliberately embeds discussion of academic integrity expectations in a broader case to students that they will benefit by: 1) learning the academic culture here at SU rather than assuming they know it; 2) adopting active study strategies backed by research in cognitive science rather than relying on those they used in high school; and 3) understanding that the academic integrity expectations faculty hold for students are rooted in standards of academic research that are critical to the generation of new knowledge. We developed this approach in conjunction with CLASS's creation of the SUccceed orientation seminars first delivered by 16 faculty across the schools and colleges as part of new fall 2018 orientation programming for first-year international undergraduates in collaboration with the Office of First Year and Transfer Programs. Since

then, we have continued to modify and improve the SUcceed seminars based on input from faculty. SUcceed seminars were delivered to domestic and international transfer and other first-year students entering SU in January 2019. This fall, approximately 700 incoming international first-year undergraduates will participate in SUcceed seminars with a dozen faculty on August 21. We invite you to use and modify the materials we have provided to deliver your version of the SUcceed seminar to your own students.

Please keep in mind that the current Academic Integrity Policy went into effect in January 2017. The [one-page summary of academic integrity expectations](#) is a good tool for class discussion as is the full description of the four sets of expectations on pages 3-5 of the [policy](#). A list of recommended topics for discussion and related information and material to assist you in addressing each topic is available on the section of our website titled "[Promoting Academic Integrity in the Classroom](#)." The goal is to provide a menu from which you may choose what is most relevant to the courses you teach.

Feel free to modify these topics and materials for your courses. Please credit CLASS when you use our materials and provide citations indicating the source of material you provide to students whether in written or oral form. Many students note and puzzle over instructors who emphasize the importance of citation in written assignments but do not consistently include citations in their own class presentations. Please do not hesitate to contact AIO with comments, questions or requests for additional information by emailing or calling us at [aio@syr.edu](mailto:aio@syr.edu) or 443-5412.