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AP World History

11 August 2020

Academic Honesty

Ninety-five percent of students have cheated in their academic career, even though academic dishonesty is looked down upon, ground for punishments, and even expulsion. Academic honesty is when a student goes against the regulated norm of a educational institution, yet many students disobey these norms at least one time in their life. Why do these students do this, and is it important to be academically honest? Through research and observations at my schools, I have come to the conclusion that academic honesty is actually needed in schools, because it is essential to develop work ethic skills later in life, and to maintain fairness.

Starting off, I feel like academic honesty builds out how we should be in the real world, whether it is actively enforced. Take for example when a person in real life is given a job to do. Technically, you can outsource the job to another person, or ask someone else for help, but in that case you would a useless mediator of labor and would be fired or replaced. Some other ways cheating could hurt your work, is when you are given a task to do in school. There may be an answer sheet on the assignment, but in real life the reason we work towards things are because of the inherent uncertainty of the problem, which means there is no answer. That means that we would fail when we get to the workforce and wouldn’t be able to use analytical skills that are critical in day to day work to solve these problems, which would make us useless. Adding on to those two points, cheating leads to people becoming pathological liars by getting accustomed to the feeling of lying, which backfires because if you make consistent lies in the workforce, you risk the possibility of digging yourself into a deep hole filled with complex lies that you would be unable to come back from. One of the most compelling reasons why it hurts us later on, is because our society relies on education to educate people. For example, when I go to a brain surgeon, I hope they passed medical school without cheating, and learned the correct procedures. Without this, our society would fall apart, with people in important jobs, not knowing how to do them efficiently. Altogether, when we engage in academic dishonesty, it takes away from the inherent value derived from school, which is preparation for the workforce.

Not only can we see the possible negative results in the future, but it creates an uneven playing field which creates unfairness. This stems from the idea that school is meant as a means not only to educate you, but to evaluate your capacity to learn, then possibly get accepted into college, or go directly into work. The former perpetuates a competitive nature at a school, in which it is imperative that we keep everything fair so that colleges may be able to evaluate us easier. If people are academically dishonest, then this would ruin the playing field, and once leaked, cause distrust in the system which would lead to even more cheating. The incentive for students then to not cheat, is because if you do, and the system spirals out of control, nobody would be able to evaluate truly on anything, and the end result would be unfair for every participant. Therefore, to keep the education space fair, we must default onto not being academically dishonest.

Some people may think that being academically dishonest is better, because school is stupid and its full of irrelevant subjects that won’t matter to you later in life. That may be true, but it’s the system put onto us students. The benefit of the system is that it is consistent to the point where you can compare different people based on their grades. Since it’s a comparative system, when you cheat, you are putting another person below you that followed the rules. Eventually when the system is broken enough and everyone cheats, then it would be okay, but the fact that some people don’t cheat gives everyone the moral responsibility to not be academically dishonest, in the benefit for everyone.

Overall, I feel like the most compelling reasons academic dishonesty shouldn’t be practiced is because of the issues that happen in the workforce, along with the unfairness that it causes in the system. I hope this helps you come to a decision on whether or not to look up the answers on Slader for your next homework assignment!