

CHEAT | Truman's records on academic dishonesty are limited

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that can be done to change policy and track data differently," he said. "But right now, just because the faculty have the power — and I'm not saying it's wrong — but it happens at the classroom level, and so it's just not typically reported of that further up."

Hoffman said the decision to collect more data would depend on whether the administration thinks the current academic dishonesty policy works.

"I'm not necessarily arguing that what we're doing is broken," Hoffman said. "We're probably like a lot of institutions in the country in terms of our approach to that."

Hoffman said he has suggested over the years that Truman use a standardized survey to get data and compare it to other universities' data, but the idea never caught any interest.

He said collecting data about academic integrity would be a big undertaking for the University.

"That clearly is more work in some ways, and we're an institution that's looking at declining fiscal resources, so I think you'd have to determine that we have a significant problem before you want to embark on things," Hoffman said.

Associate Provost Maria Di Stefano said academic dishonesty reports were not filed in one location before her time at Truman, which caused confusion for faculty who were not able to easily ascertain whether a student had previously cheated.

The current filing system, she said, is maintained by the Vice President for Academic Affairs office and is the one designated place for faculty to access all records of a student's academic dishonesty.

Anderman said that even if students fill out a survey on cheating, it might not be accurate.

"There is a socially unacceptable thing about admitting it, even admitting it on a confidential survey," Anderman said. "That is part of the reason it's very hard to measure."

Lou Ann Gilchrist, dean of Student Affairs, said it is faculty, not Student Affairs, who should determine what defines cheating in the classroom because each classroom's context should be accounted for.

"I think there are cases where faculty will catch students cheating, and they'll just handle it internally," Gilchrist said. "They won't report to their academic superiors, and they won't report it to Student Affairs."

English professor Monica Barron said that not requiring professors to report academic dishonesty doesn't mean situations of academic misconduct aren't dealt with. She said professors need some latitude, espe-

cially for international students or students who aren't well-educated in the information citation process. She also said professors consult colleagues to determine whether students are cheating.

"It's not a lone professor making a capricious decision," Barron said. "A lot of people ask colleagues or ask their chairs. So there's a sense of a whole department working together to make a decision."

Truman tries to limit cheating opportunities

Although statistics on the amount of cheating on campus might be helpful, Hoffman said the way Truman provides education helps offset opportunities to cheat.

"We don't have large classes, so I don't think we have imposters sitting for tests and those sorts of things," Hoffman said.

Barron said she breaks paper writing into steps to hold students accountable throughout the writing process. She said this helps diminish the need for last-minute plagiarism.

Brian Krylowicz, director of University Counseling Services, said there is no way to stop cheating altogether, but there are ways to limit opportunities by encouraging passion for school and discussion.

"What we need to do is have conversations about this and get people to be personally reflective and go, 'Is this who I am? Is this how I want to be?'" Krylowicz said.

Scott Alberts, associate professor of math, said his STAT 376 students do studies each semester. In fall 2000, the class studied academic integrity.

He said the final public report, released in spring 2001, recommended that a professor be clear with students at the beginning of each semester by explaining how to avoid cheating and plagiarizing and said, "The problem is when you assume everyone knows what you mean."

"None of us get into education because we like being the policeman, so I think it's not something we spend a lot of time on," Alberts said. "I think that's one reason, and what our results show is that teaching about it on the front end is much easier than policing it on the back end."

Alberts said he talks about cheating and plagiarism in every class he teaches, but he doesn't know how many other professors do this.

"Maybe it is time to do another survey," Alberts said.

The 2001 report, which included two surveys and four focus groups for students and faculty, recommended an honor code as a way to prevent academic dishonesty, but "for anything to change, the students, faculty, and administrators must know what their responsibilities

are and must take an interest in making sure that their responsibilities are carried out."

Hoffman said many public institutions, such as the University of Maryland, use a modified honor code, described by Maryland's student honor council as "academic integrity systems that incorporate many elements of traditional honors codes, but involve closer collaboration and partnership with faculty members and administrators."

Truman's future plans

Sumter said there was brief discussion last year during Senate's discussion of the Student Conduct Code about whether Truman should look into an honor code, but no plans were made.

Alberts said the 2001 final report led to changes in the Student Conduct Code, but a campus honor code was not developed.

Alberts said the 2001 report concluded that campuses with honor codes had less cheating because there were strict, student-enforced rules to prevent cheating, and students enforce themselves.

"I think one reason a campus honor code is successful is that it makes campus-wide expectations so that everyone uses the same framework, the same definitions, the same line," Alberts said.

Hoffman said he isn't sure an honor code would be a solution for Truman, but it has been effective at other schools.

Gilchrist said a student conduct code finds the lower limit for what is tolerable at the University, and an honor code looks at the higher standards.

She said Student Affairs has been focusing on more immediate issues of the economy, new administrative structures, and changes in presidency rather than academic dishonesty in the last few years.

"I just think we need to have a little bit of stability in some of these other areas to move to the point that we can have those conversations," Gilchrist said.

Di Stefano said feedback from students and faculty is vital before introducing policy changes, so that Truman's policy makers are certain they are making the system better, but the structure for this feedback currently does not exist.

Di Stefano said that despite the challenge of getting an accurate picture of academic dishonesty, a broad-based survey would at least be useful for starting conversations.

She said the academic dishonesty policy is not under any periodic plan of review. Changes and reviews to the policy are instead generated by student or faculty governance bodies or other individuals, such as professors.

Although Krylowicz said statistics would give a more accurate picture of the state of academics, he said it would be difficult to know where and how to move forward from that data.

"Does the University want to know it?" Krylowicz said. "Because suddenly when you know what the problem is, it becomes incredibly challenging to, 'What are you going to do about it?'"

CHARGED | Local girl accuses 17-year-old of molestation

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plaint with a \$100,000 bond, Wilson said. Geho will have a preliminary hearing, and if the judge finds probable cause, the case will be sent to circuit court.

"Given the age of the alleged victim, the age

and actions alleged to have occurred by the defendant, we decided it was appropriate to charge the first degree child molestation," Wilson said.

Geho will be tried as an adult. If convicted, Geho could face five to 15 years in prison, according to the felony complaint filed by Wilson.

Senate supports Safe Rides program

BY ELIZABETH KOCH
Staff Reporter

Many universities have sober driver programs, and Truman is well on its way to crafting its own.

Freshmen senator George Allan, chair of the Safe Rides committee, said the Safe Rides program would be a service to get intoxicated students home safely by using Kirk-Tran buses as transportation, making stops around Kirksville from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Representatives from Kirk-Tran did not respond to Index requests for comment.

"Our students need something," Student Senate President JoEllen Flanagan said. "This is not to enable students to be reckless and drink. It's to help stop them from drinking and driving because it's already a problem that's happening."

The Safe Rides program was intended to start this spring but has been delayed until Senate works out some final details including insurance, oversight and training, Flanagan said. The program won't be passed until all of the problems are sorted out and the program is made more specific to Truman students. Flanagan said she hopes the details are worked out by the end of this semester, with the program starting some time next year.

Flanagan said it wouldn't make sense for the program to be rejected after all the necessary changes are made, so the sooner students show that the program is something they want, the sooner it will be passed.

She said that one criticism of the program is that people see it as permission for students to go out and get drunk. The purpose of the program is to help students take responsibility for their actions without putting themselves or others in danger.

"Less than 20 percent of the campus community is part of an organization that offers sober driving," Flanagan said. "That means there's [about] 80 percent of people that don't have that option [of a sober driver]."

Flanagan first started working toward the Safe Rides program in spring 2008, taking over for for-

mer senator Chris Miller, who started working on the program in fall 2007. It's been hard to keep progress moving because of so many senators coming and going, she said.

Allan said he saw the need for a Safe Rides program his first day at Truman.

"I saw some individuals who had been engaged in some questionable activities and ... they got in a car," Allan said. "When you get in a car is when it's dangerous. That really stuck with me."

Students that have heard about the Safe Rides programs are cautiously optimistic because the program has been in the works for a long time, but has yet to be approved, he said.

The committee has a Facebook page for the Safe Rides program and is working on a survey for students to take.

"We're trying to get a pulse for how much the program is wanted," Allan said. "We could have the most fantastic program ever, but if no one wants to take part in it then what's the point?"

One of the issues that will be addressed in the survey will be how often students living off campus would use the program, he said.

Allan said he's aiming to distribute the survey before the end of the semester but doesn't know how long it will take to get the program approved.

"Hopefully we can create a comprehensive program that not only helps save lives, but gives the University something to be proud of," Allan said.

Laura Bates, faculty sponsor of the Safe Rides program, said the committee must focus on supervision, training and liability before moving forward. Bates said she also has discussed the type of assessment that needs to be done for the program and previous research with Allan as well.

"[Allan] and I have talked about doing some more assessment to make sure that this is still a need and want of students, especially in the time of how we're really examining how we spend our money," Bates said. "We want to make sure this is an investment that students want Senate to make."

Bates said she gave the committee a thorough checklist to ensure that all of the issues would be solved before taking the plan to higher administration for approval. Bates said she thinks the program has potential to be very successful and could be a great resource.

Texas A&M University founded the Safe Rides program, and Truman is following its template, as many other universities already have, including the University of Missouri. Flanagan and Bates visited the University of Missouri to learn more about its sober driving program, "Stripes," where some of their questions were answered.

"There's an understanding with the administration of the University [of Missouri], as well as the local police that [sober driving] is going on, and it's OK because what they're doing is a higher purpose and that they're trying to save lives, they're trying to take care of them," Flanagan said.

Flanagan said the agreement between Truman and the police is a potential problem that is stopping the program from being approved. Flanagan said it was surprising that many other Safe Rides programs don't have a faculty member working with the students.

"It was completely run by students, and I thought that was quite admirable," Flanagan said. "It's very self-sustaining."

Seeing the basis of operation at the University of Missouri was helpful in some ways, but the plan still needs to be tweaked to fit Truman, she said.

LOANS | Banks will no longer offer student loans

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Students will be notified on their award notices, along with individual students who fill out the FAFSA form.

One downside of the switch to direct lending will be the lack of loan counseling that banks previously provided for students, Morin said. The solution to the decrease in financial literacy programs has not been discussed yet, she said. The government will only serve as a processor.

Morin also said Truman was fortunate to make the switch in December, before direct lending was mandated.

"There will be many institutions sort of bottlenecked in that process to convert," Morin said.

Morin said the switch will be seamless for new students, and the most distinct difference for currently enrolled students will be the pos-

sibility of having to pay the government for any new loans while still paying the private lender for loans that were already taken out.

Morin said she has no doubt Truman's financial aid department will be able to work out any problems that could result from the switch.

Kathy Love, spokeswoman for the Missouri Department of Higher Education, said the Missouri Department of Higher Education has played a major part in financial outreach to students.

"We are uncertain about how that kind of service will be delivered with the changes," Love said. "We do feel there is a need for financial literacy, financial counseling and continued services for default prevention."

Love said that, ideally, direct lending shouldn't affect student loan defaults.



LARRY LOGSTON

Kirksville R-III School Board

Born and raised in Northeast Missouri, Larry Logston served Adair County as chief deputy sheriff for many years and now as a probation and parole officer. He has partnered with school districts across Northeast Missouri to improve emergency planning and security for our children. He also has served as Vice President of the Missouri Deputy Sheriff's Association.

Larry and his wife Angie have a daughter who attends Kirksville Primary School. They also serve as foster parents.

Why Larry?

- Firsthand knowledge of challenges facing our community – inside and outside the classroom.
- Proven leadership and budget experience.

Larry's Priorities

- Responsible Budget Planning
- Improve safety and security
- Continue improving facilities.
- Encourage parent and community involvement.

Remember you have two votes for school board.
Please make Larry one of them on April 6th.
 Paid for by the Committee to Elect Logston – Cathy Rohn Treasurer

lend a hand for a living

april 7



poster display

sub georgian room
11 a.m.-9 p.m.

open session:
stop by any time all day!

mini-conference

sub georgian room
6 - 9 p.m.

register to attend at
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