

## 授课文本

### Duke MBAs Fail Ethics Test

From the moment they set foot on campus, graduate business-school students are inundated with handbooks on business ethics, classes on the subject, and at many campuses, copies of a school honor code. At Duke University's Fuqua School of Business the preamble of the honor code is displayed prominently in each classroom and students must read and sign a copy of it before they even apply to the school.

But on Apr. 27, school officials said that Duke is taking disciplinary action against 34 of the school's first-year MBA students—almost 10% of the school's 2008 class—for allegedly cheating on an open-book, take-home final in one of the school's required core classes. It is the largest episode of cheating in the school's history, officials said. "There is a great deal of concern. The honor code is a cornerstone for the culture that we have here, and we take a violation of it quite seriously," said Mike Hemmerich, Fuqua's associate dean for marketing and communications.

The incident has stunned the business-school community, affirming fears that cheating might be making a comeback at MBA programs. The scandal comes at a time when many business schools are taking a closer look at their honor codes and implementing new measures such as student-run courts meant to discourage students from deceiving the school's faculty.

#### **Cheating on the Rise**

Business-school leaders have reason to be concerned. Fifty-six percent of graduate business students admitted to cheating one or more times in the past academic year, compared to 47% of nonbusiness students, according to a study published in September in the journal of the Academy of Management Learning & Education (see BusinessWeek.com, 10/24/06, "A Crooked Path Through B-School"). Donald McCabe, the lead author of the study and a professor of management and global business at Rutgers Business School, says the large number of students implicated in the Duke case is above average. "It's certainly not the biggest, but it's one of the bigger ones," he says of academic scandals involving all kinds of students.

One of the larger cases in the past five years was a cheating scandal in a physics class at the University of Virginia in 2002. The school eventually dismissed 45 students and revoked three graduates' degrees. In 2005, Harvard Business School rejected 119 applicants accused of hacking the school's admissions Web site (see BusinessWeek.com, 3/9/05, "An Ethics Lesson for MBA Wannabes").

The Duke occurrence came to light in mid-March, when the professor for the class noticed some unusual consistencies among students' answers on the final exam and as well as on assignments given during the course.

### **Stiff Penalties**

The students were brought before the school's Judicial Board and are facing a range of wide range of punitive measures, including expulsion. The board is made up of three faculty members, three students, and one nonvoting faculty chair who only votes in case of a tie.

Thirty-eight students were initially investigated, only four of whom were found not guilty of violating the honor code. (Of the 38 students, 37 were accused of cheating and one of lying.) Of the remaining 34 students, 9 will be expelled, 15 will be suspended for one year and receive an F in the class, and the remaining 9 will receive an F in the course. The penalties for the students will not go into effect until June 1, after which students will have 15 days to file an appeal. The school did not release the names of the students involved or name the professor.

Gavan Fitzsimons, a professor who is chair of the Fuqua Honor Committee, said in a written summary of the board hearings that the board spent several weeks "deliberating at length" the circumstances of the case. "It is my utmost hope that all of the individuals found guilty of violating our Honor Code will learn how precious a gift honor and integrity is," he wrote. "I know from my interactions with many of them that they will forever be changed by this experience."

### **Academic Pressures**

The faculty and student body at Duke were informed of the committee's decision on the afternoon of Apr. 27, and the news spread throughout the campus and on Internet chat groups. Charles Scrase, Fuqua's student body president, was surprised by the charges: "The classmates I work with on a day-to-day basis are ethical, outstanding individuals," he says. "Were shocked that [cheating] could've occurred to this degree."

Sonit Handa, a first-year Fuqua student, suggests the students involved in this case might have been tempted to cheat because they wanted to ensure they did well in the class: "Duke is a hectic MBA business school, and employers want good grades, so there's a lot of pressure to do well."

The pressure, of course, is not confined to Duke. Many schools have policies that encourage an open dialogue on business ethics. Students at the Thunderbird School of Global Management sign a Professional Oath of Honor similar to doctors' Hippocratic Oath,

while Penn State created an honor committee of students and faculty last year to help foster academic integrity on campus.

### **Codes Not Foolproof**

One of the more recent examples is the new graduate honor court at the University of North Carolina's Kenan-Flagler Business School. In January, the business school established a student-run honor court, a body devoted to investigating student violations of the honor code. Between 30 and 40 students, from the school's five MBA programs, are involved with the court, according to Dawn Morrow, a second-year MBA student who serves as the student attorney general for the court.

Before this, student honor code violations were dealt with through the graduate honor court system, which handled cases from other graduate programs. Morrow says that students have been eager to get involved with the honor court because they want to ensure that the school's values are upheld inside and outside the classroom. Rutgers' McCabe estimates that 50 to 100 colleges and universities have honor codes.

Schools with extensive honor codes, such as Duke, tend to have less cheating in general, McCabe says. Still, he says, it's not a foolproof measure. Business-school students are more competitive than other students, and some use cheating as a way to ensure they get ahead: "It's kind of like a businessperson who has the opportunity to embezzle money in the dark of night," says McCabe. "Sure it's more tempting, but we still expect them to be honest."