Student Conversations and Group Chats Survey

SVC Case Study
Under the guidance of Mark Hanin, Director and Vice-Chair of Student Voice Committee

Purpose

- Understand the experiences of students with using group chat services and how they benefit from them.
- Understand the impact of cheating on students and how the university can address them.

Why is it important?

- Part of the **first-ever** student-led case studies in the University's history.
- Allows for students with the **platform** to **express themselves**.
- Constructs a **compelling representation** of students' experiences at UCR.
- Builds a **network of support** with **student body**.

Kenya Olivia

she/her
First Year Graduate Student
Major: MBA Business

Esha Lakshmi Hariram

she/her
First Year
Major: Psychology

Courtney Pobst

she/her
Second Year
Major: Theatre and Creative Writing

Samantha Krone

she/her/hers
Third Year
Major: Business with
concentration in
Accounting
Transfer Student

Emily Orr

she/her/hers
First Year Graduate
Student
Major: Education

Rita

she/her/ella
Fourth Year
Major: Sociology
Minor: Labor Studies

Jaya

she/her
First Year
Major: Pre-Business
CHASS

Brianna

she/her
Third Year
Major: Biochemistry
CNAS

Chantal Eyong

she/her
Second Year Graduate Student
Major: Creative writing for the Performing Arts
CHASS

Dev

Female Public Policy (FPP) Student

Anushka

he/him
Second Year
Major: Bioengineering
BCOE

she/her
First Year Graduate Student
Major: Public Policy
SPP

she/her
First Year
Major: Psychology
CHASS

What is your overall view on group chat services? Should they be in use when in-person instruction returns this Fall? Why or why not?

A majority of participants believed group chat services are beneficial and should be used when instruction returns this Fall 2021:

- Samantha: Views in a positive light. Believes they are a **necessity** and should continue to be used in the fall. Community college did not have group chats. Wishes they did because it provides a connection with other students.
- Emily: In favor of **technology.** Thinks favorably of group chats. Should continue to be used due to its flexibility.
- Kenya: Helpful to obtain information and for **fast communication**. She believes these services should still be in use when in-person instruction returns.
- Esha: Great for **catching up on lecture**, asking questions, and **general conversation** to make up for her asynchronous lectures. She would like to see them still be put into use when in-person instruction returns this Fall.
- Jaya: Very useful whether in person or online. It provides a **sense of community**. Should be continued to be used.

One of the case study participants disagreed on if these group chat services should be used when in-person instruction returns:

- Courtney: She believes group chats are beneficial for an online environment. It provides **social interaction**, but shouldn't be used for academic purposes when we return in the fall.

Have you come to extensively use group chat services to assist in your education while at UCR? Why or why not?

A majority of participants have used group chat services to assist in their education:

- Samantha: Uses group chats extensively. Finds that they are **helpful**, especially for creating **study groups**.
- Emily: Used group chats since high school. Likes the **flexibility** it provides.
- Rita: Used them due to the availability of students, **ease of access,** and for her own clarification of material.
- Esha: Used group chats for her classes and for her internship at CALPIRG. For her classes, uses group chats for **conversation and clarification.** For her internship, uses group chats for **marketing promotions, outreach, and posting petitions**.
- Jaya: Used them for a few classes, the classes were asynchronous and it was hard to keep contact with the professors. So she could **ask questions** in the group chat.
- Kenya: Used them prior to remote learning and prefers them due to the **fast replies and informalities**.

One of our case study participants have not used group chat services extensively:

- Courtney: Does not use group chats extensively. Especially because she believes there is a lot of **gray area** in the use of group chats and what can be considered academically dishonest. She only uses them to interact with her classmates.

How would you describe your experiences with using group chat services throughout the time you have relied on them? During online learning (if they extensively used them beforehand)?

All of the case study participants described positive experiences throughout their use of group chat services:

- Samantha: **Helped her academically**. Did not extensively use them in her community college.
- Emily: **No negative experiences**.
- Rita: Enjoys using them to **confirm or deny uncertain information**.
- Kenya: Made her **remote learning** experiences **easier**. Prefers using these services because it is **similar to texting**.
- Esha: No negative cases. Uses them to **reach out to her other classmates**.
- Courtney: **Made friends** that she wouldn't have met otherwise.
- Jaya: Create study groups. It contributed to her being able to **pass her class**.
- Dev, FPP, Brianna, Chantal also reported that they have had **positive experiences**.

How important are group chat services for students? Please provide details.

Majority of the Case study participants believed group chat services are important for students

- Samantha: Immensely important. **Extra layer of connectedness** and likes the **anonymity** a group chat provides. A place where students can find **support**.
- Emily: Believes they are really important for students due to their **collaboration aspect**.
- Courtney: Provides important **interactions** between students.
- Kenya: They are really **important**.

One of the Case Study participants believed:

- Jaya: Depends on what **type of a learner** the student is. **Likes interacting with people in person** and she can learn material better when she teaches it to someone else and help others. It helps them **stay connected** and those group chats can be social as well as academic.

One issue of concern is that cheating is an issue with using group chat services. The following questions will ask you whether or not you have been impacted by cheating in group chats.

There were incidents where members in group chats were caught cheating and all students in those group chats were punished, regardless of whether or not they were directly involved. With that being said, is mass punishment fair? Why or why not?

Majority of the Case Study participants believed that mass punishment is unfair:

- Samantha: Equated to a professor **punishing everyone** in a lecture hall because **one** student was **cheating**. Students were cheating in a group chat before. **Chose to remove herself** from that group as a precaution.
- Courtney: **Isn't practiced in a physical learning environment**. Students shouldn't be punished for being exposed to others cheating.
- Jaya: Join group chats and **not even look** at them, so if students aren't using the group chats then they **shouldn't be punished**.

Some believed that mass punishment is fair:

- FPP: Would want to look at the **cause of the incident** rather have outright punishment
- Emily: Believes mass punishment is fair when there is **full on cheating**.

Do professors clearly state what they consider cheating, especially with online learning being the mode of instruction? If not, what do you believe they should do to address that?

Some case study participants have professors that clearly state cheating:

- Samantha: Professors have **clearly stated** what they consider cheating. Feels lucky that her classes have been **open book/note**, which makes cheating practically **impossible**. She believes professors shouldn't be **ambiguous** about what they consider cheating.
- Jaya: All her professors have only referred to the UCR **academic integrity form**.
- FPP: Make it over the top **clear**.
- Rita: State it on the **syllabus**.

Some case study participants have professors that do not define cheating:

- Emily: Professors have not been clear in what they consider cheating. Believes they should be **more explicit** in their definition.
- Courtney: Professors have been unclear about cheating in the beginning of the quarter. **Only specify** what is considered cheating **after a cheating incident**. After which the issue of cheating becomes more clear.

If you were involved in a case with Academic Integrity, do you know your rights as a student? If so, can you list them?

The majority of case study participants don't know their rights:

- Courtney: Doesn't know her rights as a student. Finds it **interesting** that the university is very clear on what they consider cheating, but they **don't specify the rights** of students during cheating incidents.
- Dev: Doesn't know his rights and pointed out that he **doesn't know where to find** his rights.

Some students have read their rights:

- Samantha: Skimmed through the UCR academic integrity rights. She knows that she is able to obtain a **student representative** and she can appeal any choices made.
- Chantal: Read her rights, but she **doesn't know them by heart**.

Were you previously involved in a case with Academic Integrity? If so, what happened and how were you treated?

The majority of case study participants have not been involved in a case with Academic Integrity:

- Rita, Esha, Courtney, Jaya, Brianna, Dev, Anushka and Chantal have **not been involved** in a case with Academic Integrity.

Some case study participants have been involved in a case with Academic Integrity:

- Samantha: In community college, submitted a paper in which her group mates had copied of her paper. Had to **fight really hard** just to prove that she didn't cheat.
- Emily: Worked on a statistics homework assignment with a friend, so their **answers looked very similar**. Professor was upset and gave them a zero on the assignment.
- Kenya: Involved in a case **outside of UCR**. The case was about a plagiarized paper. Her professor gave her 24 hours to rewrite the paper.
- FPP: Worked on an online exam with other students. **Boundaries for cheating weren't clear** and she didn't want to fight the case. She was **given an F** on the exam.

What do you believe is the reason that students cheat?

Some case study participants alluded to <u>personal work ethic</u> being a reason for cheating:

- Courtney: Online learning environment has facilitated cheating. Believes the **concept of learning is unclear**, which makes the significance of **cheating unclear**.
- Samantha: People cheat due to **procrastination and laziness**.
- Emily: Students cheat due to a **lack of time to prepare**. They either become desperate, lazy, or have a fear of failure.
- Kenya: Students cheat because the **resources** to cheat are **easily accessible**.
- Esha: Lack of studying, procrastination, or **lack of interest** in the class.
- Chantal: Students wait until the last minute and have **pressure to succeed**.
- Brianna: Students cheat to catch up and fill the gap in their knowledge. **Cheating is easy**, especially in an online environment, which increases the **temptation to cheat**.

What do you believe is the reason that students cheat?

Some case study participants alluded to <u>outside pressures</u> being a reason for cheating:

- Dev: There is a pressure to maintain a high gpa and to increase the chances of getting a good job. He suggests a **new method of grading**, which adjusts grades to the **level of difficulty** of the class. He believes this would encourage students to push themselves while having a safety net. Describes cheating as similar to stealing food to feed your hungry family, there is **no other option**. Lack of interest in the class as a reason for cheating.
- Rita: **Outside pressure from family/community** and a desire to attend a prestigious university. Students may also be facing personal difficulties, such as domestic violence.
- FPP: Students have a **fear of failure and getting lower grades**. There may be a lack of understanding on how to do the assignment or a lack of resources. Students may **not get the help they need** and seek outside sources.
- Jaya: People don't cheat because they want to, they feel pressured due to **time issues** and a fear of falling behind.

Do you believe there should be counseling support for students who cheat? If so, what do you think that support should look like to ensure that they have successful educational experience?

Some case study participants believe in having alternative methods to counseling:

- Samantha: **Tutoring rather can counseling** would provide greater benefits. Scheduling meetings with tutors at SOB is hard and it's not available 24/7 but it might be helpful to add something.
- Esha: If students cheat for any reason, they can be guided to take a **different path** other than cheating. It could be **one-on-one sessions** for students who cheat. Since professors are very clear on cheating, the counselor, professor, and student should meet in a comfortable environment to **discuss the cheating**.

Some case study participants believe in implementing direct counseling methods:

- Jaya: There should be support. Isn't sure what it should look like. A basic thing is talking to students and **understanding why they cheated**.
- Courtney: Depends on the type of cheating. If the student simply **copy and pasted** from a quizlet they don't really require counseling, just a **simple reprimand**. However, if the student cheated on a project or writing assignment, then the school should try to **understand why** the student cheated. They should consider their mental health, their housing status, their financial situation, etc. and **provide the resources** necessary for that student.

Additional Comments

Samantha: She has noticed a **problem** when **TA's are put into group chats**. When they are apart of group chats the student are **more afraid** and ask less questions. It is as if they are constantly watching and it **hinders learning**.

Key Points

- **12.2%** of survey respondents outrightly state that they have been **academically dishonest** on an assignment or exam when asked, while **12.8%** of survey respondents state that they **would not wish to answer** that very same question when asked.
- A majority of our survey respondents (**75.5%**) and case participants (**90.9%**) believe that group chat services are **beneficial** and should be **in use** when in-person instruction returns come this Fall since they help them **connect** with other individuals and allow them to remain engaged with course instruction.
- Students generally **do not know their rights** if they were ever involved in a case with Academic Integrity and do not know where to go online in order to access a list of those rights.

Key Points

- Students generally attribute **outside pressures** such as familial expectations, fear of failure with getting low grades, in addition to experiencing a **lack of time** to prepare for exams and assignments among others as the main reasons for why they cheat.
- Students believe that **counseling is needed** to combat cheating, albeit with differences in opinion with how that counseling can be delivered. Some students express that attending **tutoring sessions** rather than outright counseling can be one way to combat cheating while others express that **understanding the reasons** why students cheat such as looking into their mental health, housing status, financial situation, etc. through private sessions as another way to combat cheating.

Possible Recommendations

- **Directly address group chat services** usage in syllabus.
- Provide **resources** for students to understand their rights if they were accused of academic misconduct.
  - https://conduct.ucr.edu/policies/administration-of-the-standards-of-conduct.
- Establish **partnerships** with the ARC to ensure that students who cheat understand the material in which they cheated on.
- Create an **online platform** sponsored by the university through which students can connect with one another, but not commit academic dishonesty.

Growth

First Case Study	Second Case Study
139 Survey Responses	405 Survey Responses
6 Case Study participants	12 Case Study participants
Academic and Inclusivity Experiences of UCR Students	Students' Experiences with Group Chat Services and the Impact of Cheating on Students

Dissemination of Results

- Case Study Presentations
    - CNAS Executive Committee
    - CHASS Executive Committee
    - SPP Executive Committee
    - GSOE Executive Committee
    - BCOE Spring Faculty Meeting
    - School of Business Spring Faculty Meeting

Dissemination of Results

- Case Study Presentations
  - ASUCR Senate
  - GSA Executive Board
  - GSA Council
  - UC Student Association

Dissemination of Results

- Case Study Presentations
  - Diversity Council
  - SDRC
  - University Honors

Dissemination of Results

- Case Study Presentations
  - Assistant Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education Dickson
  - Undergraduate Education Leadership Team
    - ARC, UWP, Student Engagement
  - VCSA Office
    - Student Affairs Assessment and Research Manager
  - Academic Senate Chair
  - Academic Senate Director

Questions?

Contact Mark Hanin, Director and Vice-Chair of Student Voice Committee, at mhani003@ucr.edu.