

Exam Tampering and Re-submitting

I am a first-year Forensic and Criminology student and am forced to face the fact that I tried to change my mark on my midterm examination and was caught doing so and am now faced with the consequences.

When receiving my midterm back, and I saw that I had gotten a low mark, I was very upset. My friend was down for the weekend and she saw that I was not going to be able to enjoy myself because I was in a bad mood. She then told me a story of how she knew someone who changed a mark on one of their exams and got the professor to accept this new mark. At first I did not want to do this as it was a bad idea and I needed to take responsibility for getting the low mark that I did. She kept trying to persuade me into changing my mark and made it sound like it would work and assured me that I would not get caught. I did not know how to go about doing such a thing as I have never even thought about doing something like this before. I then left and when I came home it appeared that she had a blank copy of my original midterm. She then told me to fill in the answers that I would like and she would mark it like the TAs had done. After doing this she told me to just email my professor and tell him of the mix-up and to take the exam to him and he would change the mark. After that weekend I did not talk to my friend as we were both very busy with finals and she lived out of town. When I found out that I had been caught for cheating, I tried to contact her but she had moved home and changed her phone number so there was no way of getting a hold of her. Now I was left to face the consequences by myself with no explanation other than that someone who I thought was my friend talked me into it.

There are **no excuses** as to why I did agree to change the mark and went along with this plan. This was my second time taking the class as I was not successful in my first semester, so I felt that I needed this mark to make that happen. Also the **pressures coming from my friends and parents** to pass the class and to do well were very high.

Looking back I now realize that **I was not thinking clearly** on this whole situation and **did not consider the consequences** that I would be faced with when I was caught. I **know that cheating is very wrong and would never think to do this again**. This act is and was completely out of character for me and even I **do not know what came over me** to do such a thing. Receiving a **suspension of 2 years** still hurts me and my future very much. Not only will there short term consequences of my suspension but also long term pertaining to my future. I **should have thought about all of this before** I agreed to do what I did. Not only did it affect me but also the professor and the TAs. I tried accusing them of not doing their jobs properly and put them in a very difficult situation.

I have **learned a great amount** from this situation. I have learned to **take responsibility for my actions** as no one can force you to do anything. In the end it is your final decision. Also I have learned that it is **no one's fault but my own** for the marks that I receive and I need to accept those marks and **if I expect to do better I need to study harder**. Thirdly I learned that you need to **listen to your gut feeling and not let anyone tell you what you should do, because it is your future**. To prevent this from happening again I need to study harder and earn the marks that I get. Also I cannot let the pressures get to me or use them as an excuse as **everyone is under pressure in university** and you need to deal with them.

My advice to other students would be to not put yourself into this situation. Study hard for all of your tests and exams, take responsibly for your marks, because when you do get a lower mark than you want, it is no one's fault but your own.

- First-year Forensic/Criminology Student

August 2008.