

Cheaters Never Win: From Cheat-Proof to Learning-Rich Assessment Design

Friday, February 27, 2026

Reframe Cheating as Self-Sabotage

Instead of framing cheating as a rule violation, help students see it as outsourcing their own thinking. When thinking is bypassed, learning does not happen. Shifting the conversation from punishment to personal loss makes integrity feel relevant, not just required.

"If your thinking is being bypassed, then the learning isn't really happening. And so I consider cheating in the context of cheating yourself."

- Katrina Overby, Rochester Institute of Technology

Students often turn to AI shortcuts not out of dishonesty, but out of anxiety, time pressure, and a lack of confidence in application-based work. The most effective responses are not detection tools but intentional assessment redesign: buildable projects with checkpoints, multimodal options for demonstrating mastery, supervised AI use that teaches prompt precision, and co-created classroom norms. When students understand what skills they stand to gain, and what they stand to lose, integrity becomes intrinsic. Resources shared during the session, including the [Integrity Charter Activity Template](#) and the [RIT article on AI Accuracy](#), are linked here.

Design Assessments AI Cannot Replicate

Build cumulative, semester-long projects with staggered checkpoints and unique conditions that change each term. When assignments require applying knowledge to novel scenarios, students must genuinely understand the material, and last-minute AI generation becomes impossible.

Co-Create an Integrity Charter

Walk students through real AI usage scenarios and let them decide together what counts as approved use versus a prohibited shortcut in your course. When students help write the rules, they develop ownership of those standards and are far more likely to uphold them.

This summary was created using generative AI to synthesize key ideas from the Zoom session "Cheaters Never Win: From Cheat-Proof to Learning-Rich Assessment Design", held on February 27, 2026.

