

Disciplinary Approaches to Academic Integrity

Dr. Anita Chaudhuri and Naeem Nedae

Background

As post-secondary institutions in Canada continue to address the need for equity and inclusive policies for learning, the context of academic integrity (AI) has emerged as an area of interest.

Defined as “the cornerstone of ethical academic practice” (Bretag, 2020), AI informs “the values, behaviour and conduct of academics in all aspects of their practice” (Macfarlane et al., 2014).

Institutions such as, UBC recognize that an understanding and application of AI is critical for “collaborative and inclusive research culture... mentorship, scholarship, discovery and creativity” (UBC Strategic Plan, Strategy 10: Research Culture).

Why Academic Integrity Matters

Example 1: “...universities are reporting increases of up to 38 per cent in academic misconduct cases.”

(Eaton, UCalgary News, October 2020; data references MacEwan University)

Example 2: “The academic incidents more than doubled compared to the same time period last year.”

(CBC News, October 2020; data references Mount Royal University)

Example 3: “...during the Winter 2020 semester the school saw the amount of cases almost double.”

(CTV News Regina, March 2021; data references University of Saskatchewan)

These three instances of recent data on academic integrity (AI) establishes the topic as current and critically important for post-secondary institutions situated not only in Canada but also globally.

Project Objectives

- Reflect on academic integrity policies and practices for inclusion in classroom teaching.
- Bridge the gap in materials development and availability in this field.
- Share disciplinary knowledge that can inform educative approaches on academic integrity.
- Publish Open Access learning material written for undergraduate (graduate) students at post-secondary institutions.
- Create materials that can be readily used to promote discussion on topics such as, academic integrity in the professions, academic misconduct, contract cheating, use of artificial intelligence systems, to name a few.

Sample Chapters

Dr. Brenda M. Stoesz, Dr. Robin Attas, and Hafizat Sanni-Anibire (UManitoba) discuss academic integrity in relation to **accommodations for students experiencing learning challenges**. The authors argue that misconceptions surrounding academic integrity – in particular, the false idea that accommodations create an unfair advantage – can negatively impact students with special learning needs. The authors further discuss questions that students and educators may have about accessibility and equity, and how these considerations inform academic integrity.

Dr. Lisa Grekul (UBCO) focuses on various kinds of ethical considerations associated with **academic integrity in the context of creative writing**. Dr. Grekul elaborates on – and provides advice on how to navigate – dilemmas that creative writers face when drawing on details about living people (family members, friends); the fine line between “intertextualizing” and plagiarizing; borrowing from cultures to which authors do not belong; and toying with facts.

Dr. Laurie McNeill (UBCV) examines how **artificial intelligence might be appropriate or not in teaching and learning**, writing, knowledge production, and identity.

Dr. Joel Heng Hartse (SFU) explores the complexities surrounding **academic integrity in relation to seeking writing assistance** – from school-related supports like writing centre consultations and peer tutoring, to private or paid services like language tutoring or proofreading, to the darker side of online companies that offer to “help” students in need but actually do the work for them. Dr. Hartse offers guidelines for students to distinguish acceptable collaboration, tutoring, and “writing help” from practices that are more likely to be illicit and counterproductive to both academic integrity and learning in general.

Dr. Subrata Bhowmik (UCalgary) discusses a **cultural understanding of text ownership** and its implications for academic integrity. Dr. Bhowmik uses Flowerdew and Miller’s four-dimensional culture framework (1995) to achieve a better understanding of the production of written texts and shed light on pedagogical strategies that would be useful in the writing classroom.

Dr. Anita Chaudhuri (UBCO) examines the concept of **ownership in academic writing**. Specifically, Dr. Chaudhuri explores the ways that definitions of ownership, writer’s voice, and identity inform and contribute to the development of academic integrity.

Dr. Laura Patterson (UBCO) explores the connection between **academic integrity and professional identity among undergraduate students**. Specifically, Dr. Patterson examines how writing is participating in a discourse community and, ultimately, is preparation for professional practice. The aim is to demonstrate how practicing academic integrity constitutes professional identity and enables students to influence the current culture of their educational programs.

Dr. Bowen Hui (UBCO) discusses academic integrity in relation to the **use of online resources in computer science programs**. To understand why this is a problematic issue, Dr. Hui explores the role of course learning outcomes, the concept of software ownership, and common programming practices in the industry. Furthermore, Dr. Hui reviews common cases of proper and improper use of online resources to help students gain a deeper appreciation of software ownership and develop strategies to avoid academic misconduct.

Naeem Nedae (UBCO) will review the role of **ethics in academic integrity**. As a graduate student, this chapter will take a students-as-partners angle when discussing academic integrity.



References

Bretag, T. (Ed.). (2020). *A research agenda for academic integrity*. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781789903775>

Macfarlane, B., Zhang, J., & Pun, A. (2014). Academic integrity: A review of the literature. *Studies in Higher Education, 39*(2), 339-358. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2012.709495>