

## Understanding academic integrity principles using the sociological imagination: An experiment

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### **Abstract:**

When teachers try to address complex concepts in the class – such as academic integrity - traditional teaching approaches (i.e. lecturing) prove to be quite inadequate, particularly when the delivery is limited to a set of institutional definitions embedded in policies and guidelines. Even though such definitions and guidelines may be somewhat helpful in exposing students to certain academic expectations related to writing, such as plagiarism and the research paper, they often do not help students fully understand the different misconduct breaches nor embrace how they are grounded on academic integrity core principles impacting the self and others. In the context of undergraduate higher education, the goal of this study is to investigate whether the use of scenarios and fundamental values presented concurrently enables students to better understand the underpinnings of academic integrity. An experiment was therefore designed to observe whether and to what extent students' understanding of AI increases when they are exposed to different cases and guided through core values, as defined by the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), alongside the concept of Sociological Imagination (Trautner & Borland). More particularly, an online survey was designed and administered to more than 100 undergraduate students within the classroom environment in courses that are part of a Liberal Education program. The study is complemented by summary data provided from by the respective institutional committee on standing and conduct. The paper offers findings from the literature review, a detailed analysis of the methodology, the analysis conducted on the data collected, discussion on the findings, as well as suggestions for further research.

**Keywords:** Academic integrity, experiment, higher education, scenarios, sociological imagination, fundamental values.