

Academic Integrity Teacher Training: Preventive Pedagogical Practices on the Course Level

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It is a frequently heard lament amongst teachers that “students should know that!” but it is not clear that this frequently voiced expectation is warranted. Students are generally not psychic, and particularly at a time in which students from vastly varied types and levels of academic preparation are admitted, such assumptions cannot be made. When it is essential that students obtain subject matter mastery, we make the essential information part of our curriculum; we do not assume that they already know what we want them to know. We don’t ask that they find the information themselves or refer them to a web page or policy and consider the matter done, yet in the case of plagiarism, a sheet of paper – a policy, an honour code, a reminder that cheating and plagiarism will be punished or that they are expected to cite and reference correctly – is often the only “instruction” student receive on the complex problem of academic integrity.

The enigma behind the sheet of paper pedagogics is the fact that academic integrity is a discipline that, much like Thomas Aquina’s apophatic theology, is all too frequently defined by what it is not: it is not cheating on exams, it is not plagiarism, not colluding, not falsifying, not fabricating, not contract cheating. There is a sharp division between the definition of academic integrity and the approaches to teaching and to dealing with it: when defined as what it is *not*, academic integrity focuses on prohibition and correction of students’ behaviour. We focus on detection, and punishment instead of teaching students what to do instead.

Academic integrity can, and should, be defined in ways that focus on the positive approach of what it is. Glossary for Academic Integrity describes it as “Compliance with ethical and professional principles, standards and practices by individuals or institutions in education, research and scholarship” (Tauginienė et al., 2018). International Center for Academic Integrity defines it in terms of six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (International Centre for Academic Integrity, 2014). It is also fruitful to approach academic integrity as an interdisciplinary field relevant to all disciplines, as well as a key competence for sustainable development as several of the Agenda 2030 sustainable development goals refer to components of academic integrity; e.g. quality education (goal 4), scientific research (goal 9), and reducing corruption (goal 16) (Rosa, 2017).

Such a development of the definition with a focus on what academic integrity is and what values it consists of, leads to shifts in research, teaching and discussing academic integrity from methods that concentrate on the detection and punishment

of misconduct toward focusing on the preventive and pedagogical promotion of academic integrity (Bertram Gallant, 2008; Carroll & Zetterling, 2009; Ferguson et al., 2007, Morris, 2016), and, finally, to developing a culture of honesty with clear standards and a holistic and systematic approach where the whole institution is included in the process (Collins & Amodeo, 2005; East, 2009; East & Donnelly, 2012; Macdonald & Carroll, 2006; Morris & Carroll, 2016). Such a holistic approach contains a variety of methods and measures where policy and practice are aligned (Bretag et al., 2011).

Approaches to academic integrity are most effective when they are customized to specific learning contexts, therefore the positive approach towards academic integrity should be an integrated part of the curriculum. That in turn leads us to the question how we as teachers best can foster academic integrity?

In this teacher training workshop, it will be shown how the constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996, 2003) can be used to develop the knowledge of academic integrity on the course level. The examples of the progression during different stages of the learning process will be given (Anderson, Krathwohl, & Airasian, 2001; Biggs, 2003; Bloom, Krathwohl, & Masia, 1984) thus ensuring a systematic approach during different stages of higher education.

In the hands-on part of the workshop preventive pedagogical strategies will be discussed in relation to particular disciplines and learning contexts. The questions participants will be challenged to consider are following: How promoting academic integrity can be expressed as learning outcomes on different courses to ensure the knowledge of source use (Pecorari, 2013), develop good research practice, and foster academic integrity in general? What questions should be asked before choosing appropriate learning activities, what tools and activities are most adequate? How different practices in assessment design and practices can affect academic integrity and make it harder and undesirable to engage in misconduct?

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