

**Understanding Faculty Perceptions and Approaches to  
Academic Integrity in a Canadian School of Education**

**Paper presented at the**

**2018 International Conference: International Center for Academic Integrity**

**Friday, March 2, 2018 – Session 1, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.**

**Richmond, VA, USA**

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**Abstract**

Schools of education are in a unique position to foster a culture of academic integrity among pre-service teachers who will go on to careers as K-12 educators. This presentation presents the results of a year-long mixed methods study to understand the perceptions and approaches to academic integrity taken by academic staff in a Canadian school of education. Participants (N = 38) included tenured, tenure-track and contract faculty at a variety of ranks and positions.

Findings revealed that faculty had different perceptions on how cases of academic misconduct should be addressed, but had little awareness of how to prepare pre-service teachers as future mentors when it comes to cultivating academic integrity among their own future K-12 students.

**Keywords:** academic integrity, faculty perceptions, teacher education, education

**Peer review statement:** The abstract and summary for this presentation underwent blind peer review prior to acceptance.

**Presentation summary**

Academic dishonesty continues to present a major problem in higher education (Altbach, 2015; Colella-Sandercock & Alahmadi, 2015; Leonard, Schwieder, Buhler, Beaubien Bennett & Royster, 2015). Previous research provides insights into how educators can develop capacity and competence with regards to upholding the principles of academic integrity in a productive manner (Colella-Sandercock & Alahmadi, 2015; Griffith, 2013). Developing a culture of academic integrity begins with educators knowing what to do (process) and how to communicate with learners about what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

Differing approaches to academic integrity among the disciplines is not uncommon. In the field of education (encompassing both pre-service and in-service teacher education), students place high value on applied learning that will help them in their day-to-day classroom practice (Bens, 2010). Within teacher training programs, students may be more likely to cheat if they believed that their assignments or learning tasks had little or no applicability to the “real world of teaching” Bens (2010, p. 166).

The research question that guided this study was: How do faculty members in a school of education perceive and address academic integrity in their teaching practice?

Data were gathered through focus groups, semi-structured interviews and McCabe’s survey for higher education faculty. Participants (N = 38) included tenured, tenure-track and contract faculty at a variety of ranks and positions. Findings revealed that faculty had different perceptions on how cases of academic misconduct should be addressed, but had little awareness

of how to prepare pre-service teachers as future mentors when it comes to cultivating academic integrity among their own future K-12 students.

The school of education highlighted in this study has official guidelines on how faculty members are to address academic misconduct should they suspect or encounter it (see Appendix). Findings of this study revealed tensions between how faculty members responded to cases of suspected or actual academic misconduct and the school of education's official guidelines. Some faculty members were either not aware of the official guidelines or chose not to follow them. This study discusses and aims to disentangle some of the complexities of when faculty members do not choose to follow institutional guidelines and why.

The study also revealed that faculty members who work in a school of education do not automatically make the link between the work they are doing when it comes to fostering a culture of academic integrity and how the pre-service teachers whom they are teaching might think about doing the same when they enter the teaching profession.

The study points to the need for more consistent responses to suspected or actual cases of academic misconduct among faculty members; as well as the need for more candid and explicit conversations with pre-service teachers about how they can foster a culture of academic integrity with their own K-12 students upon entering the teaching profession.

There are two elements of this study that will be of interest to conference participants. Firstly, little empirical research has been conducted in the Canadian context since Christensen and

McCabe conducted their multi-university study over a decade ago (Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2004; 2006a, b). Secondly, little empirical research has been gathered about how schools of education can cultivate an awareness and culture of academic culture among pre-service teachers with a view to having them carry this forward into their own K-12 classrooms upon entering the teaching profession. This study not only presents new findings from the Canadian context, it nudges the conversation forward about how to cultivate a culture of academic integrity into the K-12 context. The ultimate point of this project is to inspire generative dialogue about how to equip the next generation of teachers and learners with a deeper understanding of what academic integrity is and how educators can begin to cultivate it from a younger age.

#### **Notes**

This study received full funding from a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Grant, awarded by the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary.

This study received full institutional ethical clearance to engage in research with human subjects (REB Certification REB16-1828).

#### **Disclosure**

Some of the material in this summary also appears in the following publication on the same project:

Eaton, S. E., Guglielmin, M., & Otoo, B. (2017). Plagiarism: Moving from punitive to pro-active approaches. In A. P. Preciado Babb, L. Yeworiew, & S. Sabbaghan (Eds.), *Selected Proceedings of the IDEAS Conference 2017: Leading Educational Change Conference* (pp. 28-36). Calgary, Canada: Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary. Retrieved from <https://prism.ucalgary.ca/handle/1880/52096>

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## Appendix: Werklund School of Education -- Academic Integrity: Guidelines for Addressing Plagiarism



### WERKLUND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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### Academic Integrity: Guidelines for Addressing Plagiarism

#### Definition

“Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work as if it were the student’s own work when it is not. Any ideas or materials taken from another source written, electronic, or oral must be fully and formally acknowledged. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- (a) The work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one’s own in an examination or test),
- (b) Parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) The whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) A student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence”. (University of Calgary Calendar 2014-15)



















#### Determining Plagiarized Work

- Does the work or parts of the work have a different flow in the writing?
- Does the work sound familiar?
- Have you used Google to see if select passages match another body of work?
- Have you used Academic Plagiarism Checker (web-based) to see if it matches another body of work?
- Other Detection software: Turnitin, SeeSources, Plagiarism Detect, and Copyscape (Caution: Content submitted using such software may be saved to a server outside of Canada. Also, if the same content is re-submitted, it may show the work as being self-plagiarized.)

#### Reaction to the Discovered Plagiarized Work

- Did the student just miss inserting the quotes and/or citations?
- Is there a pattern of using quotes or passages without citations?
- Does the student seem unaware or fail to understand the expectations for citing others’ work?
- Who needs to be informed of the plagiarism?
- What information do I provide?

Process for Reporting and Responding to Plagiarism

Undergraduate Programs in Education (UPE)	Graduate Programs in Education (GPE)	International Foundations Programs (IFP)
 Instructor to document the plagiarized work (e.g., highlight the passage(s) in the work and provide the original source from where the work was taken or with multimedia sources document by identifying the specific timing).	 Instructor to document the plagiarized work (e.g., highlight the passage(s) in the work and provide the original source from where the work was taken or with multimedia sources document by identifying the specific timing).	 Instructor to document the plagiarized work (e.g., highlight the passage(s) in the work and provide the original source from where the work was taken or with multimedia sources document by identifying the specific timing).
 Instructor to report this and share the documentation with the <b>Director of Student Experiences</b> .	 Instructor to report this and share the documentation with the <b>Graduate Program Director (GPD)</b> for the EDSA.	 Instructor to report this and share the documentation with the <b>IFP Academic Coordinator</b> .
 The <b>Director</b> works with the instructor to determine if the work is plagiarized. If plagiarized, the <b>Director</b> will send an email to the student and copy the <b>Associate Dean of UPE</b> .	 <b>GPD</b> works with the instructor to determine if the work is plagiarized. If plagiarized, the <b>instructor</b> sends the student an email informing him/her that the matter has been turned over to the <b>Associate Dean of GPE</b> .	 The <b>Academic Coordinator</b> works with the instructor to determine if the work is plagiarized. If plagiarized, the <b>Academic Coordinator</b> sends the student an email, copied to the <b>Associate Dean of IFP</b> .
 <b>First Offence: Associate Dean of UPE</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and the assignment receives a Failed (F) grade.	 <b>First Offence: Associate Dean of GPE</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and the assignment receives a Failed (F) grade (which may result in an F in the course). Student has 15 business days to appeal within WSE. This letter is cc'ed to the <b>Faculty of Graduate Studies</b> .	 <b>First Offence: Associate Dean of IFP</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and the assignment receives a Failed (F) grade (which may result in an F in the course).
 <b>Second Offence: Associate Dean of UPE</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and the student has failed the course.	 <b>Second Offence: Associate Dean of GPE</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and that the recommendation is that the student fails the course. This letter is cc'ed to the <b>Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies</b> . Student has 15 business days to appeal.	 <b>Second Offence: Associate Dean of IFP</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and the student has failed the course.
 <b>Third Offence: Associate Dean of UPE</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and the student is expelled from the program. This will mean the student will need to wait a year to return to the program. <b>Note:</b> A student in the Concurrent Program will have the letter sent to his/her Dean of the specific discipline Faculty.	 <b>Third Offence: Associate Dean of GPE</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and the recommendation is that the student is withdrawn from the program. Student has 15 business days to appeal. This letter is cc'ed to the <b>Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies for final decision</b> .	 <b>Third Offence: Associate Dean of IFP</b> sends a letter to the student informing him/her the work was plagiarized and the student is expelled from the program. This will mean the student will need to wait a year to return to the program. <b>Note:</b> A student in the Concurrent Program will have the letter sent to his/her Dean of the specific discipline Faculty.
<b>Note:</b> Offences are cumulative.		<b>Note:</b> Offences are cumulative