2 Academic Integrity as an Educational Concept, Concern, and Movement in US Institutions of Higher Learning

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Abstract

This chapter examines the trajectory of the academic integrity movement in the USA, beginning with the early conceptions of academic integrity, based on British higher education models in which ethical and moral lessons were explicitly addressed via specific, denominational religious teachings and compulsory practices that informed the earliest US institutions, and then tracing the development of the uniquely American approaches. Key factors in this development were the increasingly diverse demographics of students as well as the influence of education reformers who pressed for expanding access to higher education, which led to many students arriving at university with an incomplete understanding of the ethical expectations they would face. Additionally, American ideals that place emphasis on individual responsibility and control have led to practices such as honor codes and pledges. The discourse, framing, and descriptive metaphors of academic integrity as moral, legal, and medical issues as well as the shortcomings inherent in these frameworks are noted. Present-day academic integrity controversies are discussed, especially the extent to which academic integrity is exclusively or primarily a matter of individual choice or

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might instead be better addressed in terms of cultural expectations or systemic issues. A short history of the role of the International Center for Academic Integrity established in 1992 in response to concerns about student cheating is included. The chapter concludes by suggesting that a narrow focus on student cheating is insufficient and that what is needed, instead, is a much broader approach to the development of integrity not only for students but for educators, researchers, educational practices, institutions, and cultures.

The American Context

The idea that character and intellect should be developed in tandem appears to be as old as education itself, as evidenced in proverbs that played a role in the education of scribes in ancient Sumeria (Veldhuis 2000, p. 383). In cultures as diverse as ancient China and Greece, wisdom, compassion, and courage were regarded to be universal moral qualities and central to education. So it is no surprise that what is now called "academic integrity," loosely defined as acting in accordance with values and principles consistent with ethical teaching, learning, and scholarship, is a concept and a concern in academic communities in the USA. What may surprise some, however, are the unique characteristics of this subject in the American context that differ considerably from the British and European models upon which they were based.

Like the English schools, upon which they were most directly modeled, eight of the nine earliest universities in the USA were founded largely for the purpose of educating aspiring ministers (Brubacher 2004, p. 6). The overlap of religious morality and higher education went beyond the fact that most instructors were clergy educating future ministers. Religion permeated activities on a day-to-day basis. Not only was attendance at daily prayer service compulsory, but in the early days, US universities were the site of periodic "revivals" at which students' souls would be "saved" or "rescued" (Brubacher 2004, p. 42). As evidenced by the Yale Report of 1828, the assumption that one of the main purposes of education was as a means to further students' moral development was so deeply entrenched that arguments about curricula were premised upon the necessity of choosing subjects that would contribute to the formation of "proper values" (Drayer 1970, p. 149). There was very little questioning of the practice of grounding character development in the religious principles of specific denominations as this was the standard practice among the most prestigious universities in the world. In the USA, as new waves of immigrants of differing denominations and faiths arrived, settled, and sought education, the complexities of educating a more heterogeneous student cohort placed unique demands upon the system.

It soon became clear that in order to attract students, American universities would need to be more flexible than their counterparts in England and Europe regarding religious segregation or exclusivity. Governing boards of American universities increasingly included members from more diverse backgrounds and faiths, shifting the basis for moral education from monolithic branches or

denominations of a particular religion to a more general Judeo-Christian (primarily Catholic and Protestant) ethic, with room for diversity of belief – though only within prescribed boundaries. Practicing Judaism, for instance, might not prevent a student from attending university, but identifying as an atheist could still be grounds for dismissal (Brubacher 2004). While the shift away from unified religion changed the degree to which religious instruction and texts were relied upon for moral and ethical development, the influence of their religious origins did not entirely disappear. Even as colleges and universities became increasingly secular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, evidence of the initial fusion of religion, morality, and education has remained as a testament to their evangelistic origins (Brubacher 2004, p. 42).

One vestige of religious influence still in evidence today is the honor codes by which many American students pledge not to "lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those who do." Today's codes may trace back to "societies of inquiry" that required members pledge to refrain from unsavory habits like drinking, smoking, and gambling, so as to "suppress all vice and immorality" and to live according to Biblical principles (Brubacher 2004, p. 44). While today's codes focus largely on prohibited activities such as cheating, plagiarism, and research misconduct, the usage of such pledges to encourage students to recognize and reject behaviors considered immoral by the academic community is very much the same.

The profound and lasting influence of the origins of higher education as religious institutions in the USA often becomes especially evident during debates regarding the appropriateness, desirability, or necessity of attempting to inculcate values as an embedded mission of higher education. When the Hazen Foundation commissioned a series of studies in the 1950s, for instance, and found that significant percentages of American university students were cheating on a regular basis regardless of their subject area, they concluded that a university education might not have the positive effect on the development of ethical decision-making it had been assumed to have had (Jacob 1957). The findings of the study called into question the very mission of universities (Penister 1958) as institutions that fostered the development of character as well as intellect. Reviewers nervously posed the question, if college students were not sufficiently influenced by Christian doctrine, what might be found to fill that void and assure proper moral development (Boffey 1957)? While there is consensus about the desirability of ethical and intellectual growth happening in tandem (Drake 1941), there is no universally agreed-upon answer to that question.

Many education theorists in the USA do concur, however, that whether it occurs actively or passively, whenever information or even a practice such as writing is being taught, ethical lessons are inextricably communicated at the same time. As articulated by James Berlin, "it is impossible to deny that in teaching students about the way they ought to use language we are teaching them something about how to conduct their lives" (Berlin 1984). That belief, that the very act of teaching has moral and ethical dimensions, helps support the argument that it is appropriate to focus on moral and ethical development, even in general subject classes such as composition, to help students understand that the skills and information they use in college have moral and ethical dimensions.

While the earliest colleges and universities in the USA were built on the same models and principles of their British and European forebears, it is not surprising given the vast differences in setting, environment, and constituencies, that practices, standards, and norms, including those having to do with academic integrity, soon began to diverge. Even when compared to other English-speaking Western countries, the specific context in which the US system developed has resulted in dissimilarities that affect the way that academic integrity is understood and operationalized.

Early iterations of colleges and universities in the USA were initially modeled closely on the British and European traditions with which the colonists were familiar (Drayer 1970, p. 27). However, there was tension between the stated ideals of American society – such as equality, opportunity, and liberty – and the exclusivity that characterized higher education in most other parts of the world. Educational reformers in the USA rejected the notion that higher education was a privilege reserved for the upper classes. Instead, a growing number believed that access to education was a right. It was a mechanism by which industrious students of the middle and even servant classes could make their way to access a better life (Brubacher 2004, p. 39). Policies and practices seen as conserving the power of the ruling classes were identified and rejected in order to democratize education and make it more widely available (Berlin 1984). Increasing access to education was a goal in the USA early on, and it has remained so, with rates of college attendance (among those eligible to attend) soaring from under 2 % in the late 1800s (Drayer 1970, p. 154) to today's rate of roughly 66 % (TED: The Economics Daily 2014).

Expanding higher education opportunities to students from a wider range of backgrounds meant that US educators could not do assume that students entering college had shared experiences and educational preparation. In the UK and Europe, admission practices virtually guaranteed that entering students would have had access to personalized preparation for university (Drayer 1970). Student cohorts in the USA, in contrast, were more diverse than many of their peer institutions in terms of economic and social class, cultural background, and educational preparedness.

One consequence of such heterogeneity was that information that might rightly have been assumed common knowledge among more homogeneous groups of students – things like writing for academic purposes – became core elements of American college curricula (Berlin 1984). It was not just in terms of subject matter, however, that American students varied in terms of readiness for matriculation. The same was true in terms of their familiarity with academic norms and standards. Differences in English language competence, educational attainment of students' parents, and preparedness for college made it necessary to articulate standards and expectations to students who might otherwise have had only nebulous ideas of what would be expected of them.

Throughout successive waves of educational reform, access to higher education has remained one of the primary concerns of educational policy-makers and activists alike. At the same time, what to do about students whom educators view as under- or poorly prepared has remained a challenge (Arum and Roksa 2011, p. 34). One facet of this challenge has been meeting the needs both of students who

arrive without a clear expectation of what is expected of them in terms of integrity and the needs of institutions whose reputations, relevance, and very survival depend on maintaining high ethical standards with respect to teaching, credentials, and scholarship.

Another aspect of increased access to higher education is the effect it had on the aims and purposes of higher education itself. When only 2 % of those eligible could attend college, particularly in the preindustrial age, a focus on self-discovery was a privilege of the elite few. When higher education became more mainstream for students who would later join the workforce in agriculture, engineering, medicine, etc., curricula became more focused on career goals, and the motivation to attend college became more closely related to future earning potential. Attending college or university for instrumental purposes – future employability or earning potential – rather than to pursue knowledge or intellectual growth also has significant implications with respect to academic integrity.

Another factor related to academic integrity in American colleges and universities is the unusual degree of autonomy with which individual institutions, especially private institutions and the faculty within them, operate. The vastness of the territory contributed to the US colleges and universities having developed widely varied institutional practices and policies (Brubacher 2004, p. 4). Institutions' right to maintain a high degree of self-governance and autonomy dates back to 1819, at which time the US Supreme Court found that the government of New Hampshire lacked the legal right to exert managerial authority over a university over the objections of its trustees (Key Supreme Court Cases: Dartmouth College v. Woodward (17 US 518 1819) 2014).

Whereas higher education has been standardized and overseen via governmental policies and administrators to greater or lesser degrees in many places, autonomy from state or national governance is built into the US system. The responsibility for evaluating and certifying universities and their programs falls instead to private accrediting agencies who are charged with assuring the quality and integrity of academic programs according to the principle that "Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for academic quality; colleges and universities are the leaders and the key sources of authority in academic matters" (Eaton 2014). Unlike many of their counterparts who answer to a Ministry of Education or other governmental body, the most significant entities to which US colleges and universities are accountable are their accrediting agencies. Funding for accreditation is provided by the universities themselves, who elect to be evaluated and certified by various accrediting bodies. Membership in the accrediting organizations is voluntary, although in practical terms, because scholarships and funding from state and federal sources are nearly always contingent upon accreditation, there are very strong financial incentives to become members (El-Kawas 1998, p. 45).

In addition to the administrative autonomy of universities, efforts by faculty to determine academic matters, including those related to student conduct and academic misbehavior, without interference from government date back to the mid-nineteenth century (Brubacher 2004, p. 35). The high degree to which standards for and approaches to integrity vary among US higher learning institutions is

a subset of the high degree of variation in general among academic standards and practices in this environment. Higher education has largely successfully resisted external pressures to standardize practices, and market-driven forces have been embraced in order to attract students (Trow 1996). While discussions of academic integrity in the USA often focus primarily upon students' behavior, institutional and societal factors are increasingly recognized as having significant potential to affect academic cultures with respect to integrity. As such, both autonomy and practices of accountability are factors worthy of consideration.

As with most complex systems that develop over time, even when elements are no longer actively part of the system, their influence often persists, sometimes with confounding results. As a relatively new system based upon far older predecessors, the US higher education system has evolved as predominately secular, yet many artifacts and attitudes that reflect religious principles remain. As access to higher education increased, curricular changes were undertaken to remediate underprepared students academically. However, deficits with respect to ethical expectations too often go unaddressed or are addressed punitively. Institutions entrusted with the credentialing of their students are themselves credentialed not by government agencies but by accreditors that they choose and pay themselves. And while access to higher education increased, the goals of those admitted shifted toward career rather than intellectual development. All of these factors have shaped the discourse and practices of academic integrity in US higher education.

Dominant and Alternative Discursive and Conceptual Frameworks

Long before academic integrity became a focus for systematic study (as in the Hazen Foundation work, referenced above), scholars in the USA were already engaged in battles not only over standards for integrity in academic work but also as to how academic integrity issues should be conceptualized and described. Paradoxically, while goals related to integrity might be framed aspirationally as acting in accordance with a moral framework, in practice, the focus has often been on negative rather than positive behaviors. In one of the earliest extant records of scholarly debate on a subject related to academic integrity practices in the USA, the American Historical Association adopted its own definition of plagiarism in 1884 following a dispute between two academicians. Identifying plagiarism as a collective concern among scholars of history, they defined plagiarism as the use of someone else's "concepts, theories, rhetorical strategies, and interpretations" as well as word-for-word copying. Additionally, they specified that plagiarism should be considered a professional or ethical rather than legal breach, drawing a distinction between academic misconduct and transgressions of a legal (copyright) nature (Grossberg 2011) that remains in place today. This early effort to define and prohibit plagiarism also set another foundational precedent for academic integrity discourse in the USA by focusing attention on prohibited behavior (in this case, plagiarism) rather than desired behaviors (original work). This tendency to focus on

the negative is increasingly being criticized by some experts on academic integrity; however, the tendency to target prohibited behaviors rather than promote desirable ones is widespread in higher education policies and practices. To date, it endures (Howard 1993).

Another notable feature of academic integrity discourse in the USA is the tendency to frame transgressions of rules, standards, and norms in terms that connote moral weakness, willful misconduct, duplicity, or wrongdoing. This framing of cheating, and especially plagiarism, as an issue of morality rather than education can be observed throughout the history of such discussions, in articles published in a wide array of journals across various grade levels and (academic) disciplines in publications as diverse as *Social Problems*, *The High School Journal*, *Improving College and University Teaching*, and *American Scholar*. As suggested by their titles, "Academic Integrity and Social Structure: A Study of Cheating Among College Students," "Who Is Kidding Whom," "The Student Cheater," and "The Academic *Ethos*" (respectively), the articles discuss academic integrity in terms of individual character, morality, social order, principles, and virtue, going so far in some cases as to characterize cheating as "deviant behavior." This framework and vocabulary is particularly prevalent in early discourse, which helps explain the extent to which early academic integrity efforts focused nearly exclusively on issues related to rooting out cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and other undesirable behaviors.

While there is an increasing trend for scholars to argue that moral and ethical frameworks are of limited use and should be abandoned in favor of pedagogical frameworks (Blum 2008; Howard 2010) or literary ones (Valentine 2006), the tendency is persistent. Even students often explain their own academic integrity breaches in terms of lack of familiarity or knowledge (i.e., "I didn't know I was supposed to do a works cited page") while framing their responses in moral terms such as fairness, respect, and responsibility when asked to explain more generally why citation matters (Kroll 1988). Simply using the rhetoric of morality does not in and of itself dictate that responses to academic integrity breaches must be punitive. Responses to acts framed as misconduct or wrongdoing can range from the constructive – helping to educate or develop the individual – to the punitive or a combination of both. It is nevertheless true, however, that whereas an appropriate remedy for a *mistake* or *lack of knowledge* in academic settings is nearly always instructive, an appropriate response to *wrongdoing* or *willful misconduct* might reasonably be punishment; thus, the conception of academic integrity transgressions as moral failings continues to significantly affect the way such issues are handled (East 2010).

Another notable framework for academic integrity discourse in the USA is that of illegal or criminal behavior. Articles and presentations on the subject of plagiarism, for instance, frequently include a reference to the origin of the term in the Latin word, *plagiare*, used by the Romans to describe kidnapping, especially kidnapping for the purpose of making the victim a slave. It was appropriated by the Roman poet, Martial, who uses the term to describe his works, which he had set loose into the world, only to have them enslaved by rival poet, Fidentinus

(Biagioli 2014). Other definitions and metaphors for plagiarism that signal lawlessness include the related ideas, literary theft, stealing, purloining, and even thievery in the sight of God (Bluedorn 1997) as well as other crimes including rape (Mallon 1989).

Whereas the moral framework for understanding academic integrity transgressions focuses attention nearly exclusively on the behavior and choices of the individual and his or her shortcomings, the legalistic framework turns those shortcomings into a threat, expanding the potential for harm outward, into the scholarly community where others might be harmed. Predictably, rhetoric of criminality is more likely to evoke punitive responses, but in addition, when "[e]nacted as policy, words such as stealing, tracking, and catching fuel the self-fulfilling cycle of suspicion" (Zwagerman 2008) which undermines and potentially damages classroom environments and relationships between instructors and their students.

A third frequently invoked conceptual framework for academic integrity breaches is that of disease. Plagiarism has been variously described as a plague (Dennis 1948), festering, parasitism (Zwagerman 2008), and a virus (Mallon 1989) and cheating as a contagion (Rettinger and Kramer2009) that is endemic to education (Haines et al. 1986). Like the legalistic rhetoric, the rhetoric of disease implies that the transgressor is a danger not only to him or herself, but to the community as well. This framework extends the potential circle of harm even farther, implying that once begun, academic dishonesty may multiply. When framed as a virus or plague, cheating becomes something that can get out of control, harming or even destroying a community irrespective of the intentions of the person or people who commit the act. The rhetoric of disease prompts responses that have both to do with eradicating the disease and taking steps to inoculate against it or, failing that, at least putting up protective barriers to protect those not yet infected.

Discussions lamenting the calamitous threat posed by cheating were not confined solely to education experts and scholars. In addition to being a topic of concern in disciplines ranging from psychology and sociology to business and marketing, the general public has frequently been engaged in the discussion as well. In 1950, *The Saturday Evening Post* asked readers to put themselves in the position of an instructor whose students had stolen test papers in order to cheat on the exam (McKowan 1950). Ten years later, that same periodical ran a feature story entitled, "American Disgrace: College Cheating." While once again calling attention to a failure of morals rather than inadequate understanding, the later article focused not only on student behavior but also the ethical culpability of instructors who failed to prevent, detect, or respond to incidents of cheating (Ellison 1960).

A recent attempt to revise the discourse surrounding plagiarism employed a model borrowed from police handbooks to identify each of the necessary elements of plagiarism, not to portray it as a legal transgression, but to clarify exactly what plagiarism is and is not. According to Fishman (2009), plagiarism occurs when someone uses words, ideas, or work products:

1. Attributable to another identifiable person or source;
2. Without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained;

3. In a situation in which there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship; and
4. In order to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain which need not be monetary.

From the earliest days of academic integrity as a focus for scholarly inquiry in the USA, competing narratives have made alternative claims about the nature of the issues, the significance of the threat posed by cheating, and the best ways to respond. In one of the earliest studies on the subject, published in 1904 under the oxymoronic title, "Student Honor: A Study in Cheating," author Earl Barnes made the case that the reasons students fail to report fellow students for cheating is not so much that they are morally deficient, but instead have not yet completed their moral development and therefore are governed by "a sense of honor grounded in sympathy, a sense of personal, unworthiness, love of open fight, and a personal loyalty to their fellows" rather than a sense of social responsibility. He further suggested that the remedy is guidance and maturation rather than outrage and punishment (Barnes 1904). A study of cheating among young women in college found that a larger percentage would cheat when given the opportunity to do so, but concluded that their education rather than their morals was deficient, saying "[u]ntil we are willing to provide specific training in honesty in the examination situation beginning in the primary grades, we will not be justified in expecting honesty amongst students" (Cheating by College Girls 1927).

Much of the dominant discourse regarding academic integrity in the US context has been framed by moralistic, legalistic, or disease-based discourse focused largely on discouraging, preventing, detecting, and addressing undesirable behaviors. The dissenting voices have discussed the subject using conceptual lenses and alternative narratives more congruent with educational values. In the 1970s, roughly a decade after academic integrity became firmly established as a topic of scholarly interest (Bertram Gallant 2011), researchers were already raising questions about the ways in which US systems and traditional methods of education and assessment might *invite* plagiarism (Malloch 1976, p. 167).

More recently, scholars have suggested that by using more individualized assessments – tied to a location or time – teachers might both reduce the incidents of cheating and improve learning outcomes (Lang 2013). Others have interrogated the discourse and assumptions that inform our handling of academic integrity issues, proposing alternative frameworks for interpreting and describing academic misconduct and suggesting, for instance, that we reconceptualize the concept of plagiarism itself and reframe it not as theft, but as failure to give proper recognition – the difference between "*passing* off and *passing on*" (Robillard 2009) or to substitute a less pejorative term like "insufficient citation" rather than plagiarism (Howard 2000). Leading researchers on academic integrity such as Donald McCabe, who began research focusing on cheating behavior and how to prevent and stop it, are increasingly concluding that the most effective mechanism for reducing cheating is, in fact, better education.

A considerable body of evidence suggests that not only can many instances of supposed academic misconduct be traced to incomplete understandings about

standards and practices on the part of students (DeVoss and Rosati 2002), but also that some of the standard ways of addressing academic integrity are at odds with the values of teaching and learning most educators embrace. In instances in which they focus on catching and punishing rather than teaching and learning, this approach is often seen as setting up a false, simplistic, and ultimately unhelpful dichotomy of good and bad behavior (Howard 1993; Zwagerman 2008). More optimal results could be obtained by spending the necessary time and effort to understand issues of academic integrity and dishonesty in their full degree of complexity and addressing them in educative rather than punitive ways. Oversimplifying academic transgressions as something that only bad students do (McCabe 2001) does little to improve the situation or reduce the likelihood of cheating. A richer and deeper understanding of academic integrity as a "constellation of skills, taught largely through the long apprenticeship of higher education" (Blum 2008) is seen by many academic integrity experts as having greater potential to help students acquire both the understanding of how to cite and an appreciation for why it should be done.

Sadly, much of the discourse continues to focus on negative behaviors (and hence prohibiting, catching, and punishing) rather than teaching and learning (Howard 2010). This is demonstrated by the fact that even among university leaders and policy-makers, university academic integrity policies continue to be defined in terms of behaviors that are prohibited such as plagiarism and cheating rather than by positive terms like authenticity, originality, efficacy, and honesty. By continuing to focus on academic integrity as if it consisted solely of preventing, identifying, and dealing with undesirable behaviors, many universities send the message that eliminating cheating is the goal of academic integrity initiatives rather than ensuring that scholarship, assessment, and research can be relied upon. While integrity is a worthy goal, failing to understand its relationship to teaching and learning risks diverting time and attention from more necessary and useful educative activities. It can also adversely affect learning environments to the point at which "[o]verzealous and perhaps misguided efforts to stamp out plagiarism and cheating [become] more destructive than productive" (Zwagerman 2008).

The (International) Center for Academic Integrity

Since becoming a focus of scholarly activity, academic integrity has most often been looked upon in the USA as being concerned with student activities, perceptions, and behavior. It is now recognized that academic integrity is not just about students. Assessment validity, pedagogical practices, institutional processes, campus norms, and faculty and administrative staff conduct all contribute to the climate of integrity on a given campus. Spearheading efforts to address issues of integrity in their full complexity, the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) is another unique feature in the context of academic integrity in the USA. The ICAI was founded (as the Center for Academic Integrity) in 1992 in response to alarming research on the subject conducted by Founding President Donald McCabe.

Research by McCabe built upon the work of Bill Bowers, who had published one of the first large-scale comprehensive surveys of student cheating in 1964 (McCabe 2001). So as to be able to make valid comparisons between his data and that of Bowers, McCabe asked similar questions, to determine whether cheating was increasing, decreasing, or remaining relatively stable. While some areas (most notably those related to serious cheating on writing assignments) showed only modest increases, others were considerably more troubling, leading McCabe to bring together a group of concerned researchers and scholars who were motivated to address issues of cheating in higher education (ICAI n. d.). The following year the group held its first annual conference at the University of Maryland, where they familiarized themselves with the details of McCabe's research and turned their attention to finding ways of deterring students from cheating.

Over the following two decades, the focus of the group's academic integrity efforts underwent two major shifts. The first was in looking not only at student behavior but increasingly toward the roles played by instructors, instruction, and academic practices. The second shift was one suggested by Bowers, decades before. Bowers had noted that among all the factors associated with increased risk of cheating, peer behavior was the most influential factor of all (McCabe 2001). Based on that finding, as well as what McCabe and research partners Linda Trevino and Keith Butterfield had confirmed in their own surveys, the focus of ICAI expanded again to look at not just students or students and teachers but to academic communities and the influence of the norms that communities adopt (McCabe 2001).

One of the earliest questions to be addressed by both Bowers and McCabe had to do with the efficacy of so-called honor codes. While both researchers found a positive relationship between honor codes and lower than average rates of cheating, neither could identify a causative link. In fact, statistical anomalies led McCabe and Trevino to question the nature of the relationship, because although overall rates of cheating were lower at schools with honor codes, it was also the case that one school with no honor code boasted one of the lowest cheating rates while one school with an honor code was among the highest. Upon further investigation, Trevino and McCabe discovered that despite lacking an honor code, the school with low cheating rates had a culture in which integrity was valued in the same way typically found at honor code schools; whereas in the case of the school with both an honor code and high rates of cheating, the century-old code was rarely explained or discussed.

The researchers thus concluded that rather than being intrinsically useful, the benefit of having an honor code was as a touchstone for discussion, a reminder of academic principles, or as expression of shared values (McCabe 2001). Additional factors that correlated positively with the establishment of cultures of integrity include recognizing integrity as an institutional value, clarifying expectations regarding integrous behavior, encouraging student ownership of academic integrity policies and practices, and practicing fairness with regard to assessment and grades (McCabe and Pavela 2004).

Other promising research findings on effectively promoting academic integrity include increasing recognition that better education rather than utilization of

technology is the most effective way to deter cheating and increase integrity (McCalister and Watkins 2012) and that students are less inclined to cheat when they are engaged (Hendricks et al. 2011). Another recent development in the field of academic integrity research in the USA involves mounting evidence that while most people do not engage in what they perceive as "serious cheating," many do cheat in small ways or in situations they consider inconsequential (Laser 2008). One key determinate of cheating is the extent to which people can transgress while still maintaining a positive self-image of themselves as essentially honest and good (Ariely 2014). These and similar findings suggest that the severe, morality-based frameworks used in traditional honor codes and policies may be missing the mark. Those engaged in the prohibited behaviors (lying, cheating, stealing) may be able to rationalize their academic integrity breaches as less serious and thereby fail to recognize the code as relevant to their academic work. If that is true, it provides yet another reason to reconsider the discourse used to describe issues of academic integrity.

On the Horizon

There are several persistent, pressing questions that academic integrity scholars in the USA find themselves compelled to address in order to move the field forward. One is the tension between postmodern concepts of authorship as a complex, necessarily multiple construct and the idea that sources must be definitively identified and acknowledged. While scholars have noted and explored originality and plagiarism as relative rather than absolute concepts (Kincaid 1997), it remains difficult to translate these ideas into practice. It seems clear, however, that the instructions that educators give – such as directing students to fully document all of their sources – are at odds with the impossibility of fully documenting all of the sources from which new knowledge is drawn (Rankin 1994; Spellmeyer 1994). Finding ways to address, if not resolve, some of the tensions between conflicting concepts such as homage, originality, mash-ups, aggregation, social authorship, and artistic quotation are challenges likely to persist for some time.

Another complex question to be addressed is whether academic integrity issues such as plagiarism are best addressed within an ethical discourse or within the context of literary or scholarly practice (Valentine 2006). Throughout its history in the US context, the former has unquestionably held sway, but it does seem problematic to apply moralistic standards to students who plagiarize, for instance, when one of the main learning objectives is to become familiar with the conventions of academic writing (Bowdon 1996). It seems particularly problematic to respond to students' breaches of integrity with regard to plagiarism when there is ample evidence that citation conventions (particularly those relating to the "owning" of words or ideas) are not at all intuitive to those outside academic systems/communities (McCleod 1992).

Perhaps the most significant questions for the future, however, concern the relationship between academic integrity, the nature and purpose of education, and the mores of American society – especially those related to efficiency and success. Society consistently sends messages that success is about earning a lucrative living and that education is instrumental in achieving that success, and good grades are essentially "coupons for future success" (Zwagerman 2008). Surely these messages are at least partially to blame when students see their schoolwork as something to be completed as *efficiently* rather than as *ethically* as possible. If the process of becoming educated is a mere means to an end rather than having intrinsic value, why not take shortcuts to speed up the process, particularly in a society that rarely questions the idea that efficiency is a positive good?

Summary

The study of academic integrity in the USA has expanded from a narrow focus on identifying and eradicating student cheating to a much broader concern with the integrity of educational institutions, practices, and cultures. American scholars have come to realize that the absence of cheating does not equate to the presence of integrity, and that targeting individual instances of cheating and plagiarism may not be the best way to achieve educational objectives. Moving forward, it is important to remember that educational objectives are the primary aim of academic integrity and that sometimes, academic integrity breaches are less a problem in and of themselves than a warning that something else is going wrong. Perhaps some of the discomfort around academic misconduct is due to a recognition that society is still dependent on teaching methods that better met the needs of twentieth-century students rather than the students of today. Although the scholarship of teaching and learning has long advocated interactive, experiential learning rather than memorization and rote learning, in many instances, educators "give too much weight to the passive adoption of others' ideas, to the mindless repetition of slogans as if they were thoughts, to the view that education is merely a means to a degree or a certificate, not something important for its own sake" (White 1993, p. A44). That kind of education is not only an invitation to cheat, it is also ineffective.

The increasing concern with academic integrity issues may be a signal that in a world in which information is easy to access but challenging to sort, distill, evaluate, test, and apply, approaches to promoting integrity and methodologies for teaching and learning have not been sufficiently adapted. Eliminating academic misconduct, even if it were possible, does not guarantee improved learning outcomes. To refocus attention on learning requires renewed consideration of student engagement, mastery-centered education, play, and other learner-focused techniques, to teach not only disciplinary subject matter but also the ethical mores of the academy.

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