



Academic Integrity Policy Analysis of Chilean Universities

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Accepted: 31 January 2024

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Abstract

New technologies could facilitate new ways of cheating. This emerging scenario places academic integrity policy in higher education institutions as critical. Academic integrity scholars have designed conceptual frameworks to analyze academic integrity policy. The body of the literature on academic integrity policy analysis includes studies developed in North America, Europe, and Australia. However, insight into several regions of the world is lacking. This pioneering study in the Chilean context analyzes documents addressing academic integrity at forty-three accredited universities. Using a qualitative research design, we framed this policy analysis in the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity policy: access, approach, responsibility, detail, and support. The findings revealed challenges with accessing documents online, a strong presence of legal language that might not be understandable to all students, and a scarcity of information about review cycles. The punitive approach was prevalent, with a significant focus on students' conduct. Signs of collaboration and mechanisms for promoting academic integrity cultures were nearly absent. The documents primarily targeted students and the roles of other stakeholders concentrated on the enforcement of sanctions and misconduct investigations. The analysis also showed the use of general definitions to describe academic integrity breaches, inconsistency across the system in defining plagiarism and a lack of guidance to address contract cheating and unauthorized use of generative artificial intelligence. The findings also highlighted the unavailability of institutional support to teach, learn, and research with integrity or references to research-based practices. We propose twelve practical recommendations for policymakers and academic integrity advocates.

Keywords Academic integrity · Educational approach · Policy analysis · Higher education · Contract cheating

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Introduction

The current educational landscape requires robust strategies to protect the academic integrity of higher education institutions. The predominant challenges and threats include contract cheating, file-sharing, and the unethical uses of artificial intelligence in assignments and assessments (Comas-Forgas et al., 2020; Curtis & Clare, 2017; Kumar et al., 2022, 2023; Lancaster, 2020; Rogerson, 2017). Another factor that adds complexity to this scenario is the emergence of a transactional approach to learning. The underlying premise of this approach suggests that the acquisition of a qualification takes precedence over the actual process of learning (Bretag et al., 2019; Rogerson & Basanta, 2016). Given the broad spectrum of options that may distort the accurate representation of students' academic performance, educators might encounter difficulties in assessing individual attainment (AAIN, 2023; Foltýnek et al., 2023). The existing body of scholarly literature suggests that breaches of academic integrity represent a widespread concern on a global scale (Bretag, 2013; Sureda-Negre et al., 2020; Tee & Curtis, 2018). As a result, it is incumbent upon higher education institutions to ensure that credentials are not awarded to individuals who may have circumvented the learning process dishonestly (Dawson, 2020; Lancaster, 2023). A lack of action could severely damage their reputation (Bretag, 2013; Glendinning, 2022).

The search for effective paths to ensure academic integrity has become a priority. In this milieu, experts have underscored the significance of developing effective academic integrity policies. These policies are critical in safeguarding “shared understandings and practices” (Bretag & Mahmud, 2016, p. 464). Academic integrity policies have the potential to influence individuals and collective behaviour in areas such as teaching and learning, feedback, administrative procedures, and assessment, which may contribute to the reduction of academic integrity violations (Bretag et al., 2011a; Bretag & Mahmud, 2016). The development of an academic integrity policy analysis has emerged as a vital initiative for educational institutions aiming to foster strong academic integrity environments (Möller, 2022; Sureda-Negre et al., 2020).

Recent media reports underscore that administrators from higher education institutions in Chile express concern regarding the perceived increase in academic misconduct rates (Araya et al., 2023; Díaz, 2020; Rostion, 2021; Squella & Bollo, 2020) and their inclination toward bolstering academic integrity cultures (AEQUALIS, 2020; Arce et al., 2021; CNA, 2023a; CRUCH, 2023; Sánchez, 2020). Although perceptions of heightened academic misconduct have been reported in various regions of Latin America (Ayala-Enríquez et al., 2020; García-Villegas et al., 2016; Orellana et al., 2022), academic integrity studies are still emerging in the region, leaving these claims uncorroborated. Additionally, unlike some institutions in Australia and North America, institutions in this region do not communicate academic misconduct reports publicly (e.g., SFU, 2019; UNSW, 2022). Recent research in the region reveals factors associated with academic integrity breaches among students. These factors encompass a perceived excessive workload, the accessibility of technology and contract cheating services for committing fraud, family members' pressure to achieve high grades, fear of losing a scholarship or expulsion from the program, a deficiency of academic integrity skills, perspectives on peer solidarity, and responses to assessment design (Araya et al., 2023; Ayala-Enríquez et al., 2020; Medina-Díaz & Verdejo-Carreón, 2016). Hence, Chilean educational administrators' concerns merit consideration as recent research reveals the nuances and complexities concerning academic integrity in the region.

Chilean universities have established codes, regulations, and policies addressing aspects related to academic integrity. The regulatory framework is derived from Law n° 21.091 of *Higher Education*, which stipulates the institutions that belong to this system, including universities, must “pursue the comprehensive and ethical formation of individuals, oriented towards the development of autonomous and critical thinking, encouraging them to participate and actively contribute in the different areas of life in society” (BCNC, 2018a, p.1). This legislation also delineates the dimensions, criteria, and standards to which Chilean universities are required to adhere, as further elaborated on by Law n° 20.129 of the *National System of Quality Assurance in Higher Education* (BCNC, 2018b). The framework’s criteria do not include academic integrity. However, academic integrity could find a space in the first dimension, referred to as teaching and outcomes of the educational processes. This dimension points institutional attention towards the quality of student education and the requisite policy and mechanisms for its assurance (CNA, 2023b). Similarly, the second dimension, strategic management and institutional resources encompasses criterion n°7, which advocates for the holistic development of community members (CNA, 2023b).

Given the principles of autonomy, quality, and transparency established by the Law of *Higher Education*, universities in Chile have implemented various approaches to ensure quality. In this context, stakeholders perceive quality as the outcome of ongoing internal feedback procedures designed to facilitate the achievement of institutional objectives within the framework of Chilean regulations (CNA, 2023c). Consequently, it is anticipated that a variety of documents related to academic integrity, including regulations, codes of ethics, and policy, will serve as evidence in quality assurance procedures (CNA, 2023c). This trend is also present in other countries of the region (Cancelo-San Martin et al., 2022).

Despite the presence of a regulatory framework, the perceived increase in instances of academic misconduct indicates a need for exploration into academic integrity policy. Hence, we aim to analyze the current state of academic integrity documents in Chilean accredited universities by systematically extracting, evaluating, and synthesizing information related to the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity using a qualitative research design (Bretag et al., 2011a, b, 2013; Stoesz & Eaton, 2020; Stoesz et al., 2019). Furthermore, we intend to provide recommendations for Chilean higher education leaders predicated on the identified areas of improvement and the available academic integrity policy literature. The findings could contribute to the improvement of a regulatory framework to promote academic integrity cultures within the Chilean higher education system. Likewise, this study’s findings could provide international educational stakeholders with new insights into academic integrity policy development. The main research question of this study is: What is the current state of documents addressing academic integrity in Chilean accredited universities through the lens of the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity? Drawing from the identified areas of improvement and the research-based knowledge and experiences in the academic integrity field, what recommendations can be put forth for consideration by decision-makers in Chilean higher education?

This article is organized in the following manner: literature review, methods, results, discussion, limitations, directions for future research and practice, and conclusion. In the literature review, we include the theoretical foundations of the study. Following this, in the methods section, we provide details about data sources and analysis. We present the results and follow with a discussion by linking our results to the extant literature and theory and providing recommendations. Finally, we describe the main limitations of the study, suggest some directions for future research and practice, and offer some concluding thoughts.

Literature Review

The analysis of Chilean academic integrity policy requires exploring the significance of policies and approaches. It also entails a deep understanding of the policy analysis frameworks developed by academic integrity scholars. Collectively, these components constitute the basis for the current study.

Academic Integrity Policy: Significance and Approaches

Policy is not the only component in developing academic integrity cultures. However, it plays a pivotal role (Bretag et al., 2011a; Cullen, 2022). Academic integrity policy is the first step institutions should take to manage academic integrity (Bretag & Mahmud, 2016). Academic integrity policy comprises definitions, processes, policy statements, and secondary and complementary policy instruments for its implementation (Eaton, 2021; QAA, 2020). Through policy, institutions establish what academic integrity is for them, what actions are regarded as breaches, what various stakeholders can do to report them and how groups and individuals in the institutions can solve them (Eaton, 2021).

The development of academic integrity policy can be informed by punitive and educational approaches (Bretag et al., 2011a; Cullen, 2022). Policies developed under the punitive approach focus on what is wrong and aim for rule compliance and detection to dissuade cheating (Bertram Gallant, 2008; Cullen, 2022). Hence, words such as *dishonesty* and *violations* are frequently used (Bretag et al., 2011a). One salient aspect of this approach is its strong focus on student conduct (Bretag, 2013). The deployment of policy-informed actions activates upon detecting an integrity infringement (Kenny & Eaton, 2022). Research indicates that the implementation of the punitive approach in policy and disciplinary processes may engender negative experiences for students, such as unease, perceptions of marginalization, impotence, and anxiety (Davis, 2022; Sanni-Anibire et al., 2021).

Academic integrity policy informed by an educational approach includes procedures to involve various community members in its development to create a sense of shared responsibility and promote an understanding of academic integrity as the basis for ethical decision-making and practice (Bertram Gallant, 2008; Bretag et al., 2011b; Bretag & Mahmud, 2016; Kenny & Eaton, 2022; Morris & Carroll, 2016; Sureda-Negre et al., 2016). Members of the educational communities should endeavour to understand the concept of integrity within their specific local context and its connections with other related principles (Ayala-Enríquez et al., 2020). The academic integrity policy, written from an educational standpoint, underscores ethical tenets such as honesty and integrity and aspires to ensure common understanding by offering various proactive educational development opportunities and resources (Bretag, 2013; Bretag et al., 2011b; Bretag & Mahmud, 2016; Cerdà-Navarro et al., 2022; De Maio & Dixon, 2022; Glendinning, 2013; TEQSA, 2017). Policy presence, multi-stakeholder participation in policy development, and effective communication of the rules written in policy can help reduce breach rates (Sureda-Negre et al., 2016). Bretag et al. (2011a) and Bertram Gallant (2017) underscore making policy visible through teaching and learning activities and formative feedback. When preventative actions fail at institutional, departmental, or individual levels, policy informed by the educational approach provides guidance to deal with breaches and ensure that those who breached it take responsibility for their actions (Bertram Gallant,

2008; Bretag & Mahmud, 2016; Cullen, 2022; Sanni-Anibire et al., 2021). Academic integrity breaches can transform into learning opportunities (Bretag & Mahmud, 2016). The educational approach promotes developing nuanced and carefully articulated policies well aligned with institutional mission statements and rules of conduct (Bretag, 2013; De Maio & Dixon, 2022).

Academic integrity scholars have identified the presence of blended approaches to policy. These documents include statements of purpose aligned with an educational approach but ultimately focus on misconduct, reflecting a punitive one (Bretag et al., 2011b; Stoesz & Eaton, 2020). This reality suggests that, in some circumstances, academic integrity policy cannot be categorized as fully punitive or educational.

Academic Integrity Policy Analysis Frameworks

In response to these calls, scholars have developed conceptual models for academic integrity policy analysis. The Academic Integrity Maturity Model (AIMM) (Foltýnek & Glendinning, 2015; Glendinning, 2013, 2017) and the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity policy (Bretag et al., 2011a, b) are two main examples. The AIMM uses survey responses to identify the status of processes and systems at national levels. This tool was originally designed to help identify the strengths and weaknesses of institutional strategies for academic integrity to compare national results, and it has provided insight into the state of European academic integrity policy (Glendinning, 2013, 2014, 2017). The survey includes two criteria concerning policy: “fair, effective and consistent policies for handling plagiarism and academic dishonesty” (Foltýnek & Glendinning, 2015, p. 209) and “communication about policies and procedures” (Foltýnek & Glendinning, 2015, p. 209). The evolution of this model is the Scorecard in Academic Integrity Development (SAID), which integrates the AIMM and the Academic Integrity Rating System (AIRS) of the International Center for Academic Integrity (Glendinning, 2017).

The five core elements of exemplary academic integrity policy focus on policy documents and use interrelated lenses for their analysis: access, approach, responsibility, detail, and support (Bretag et al., 2011a, b). The underpinning of the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity policy is that the basis for fostering academic integrity in higher education institutions involves the alignment of academic integrity decision-making, academic integrity review processes, teaching and learning practices, and policy (Bretag et al., 2011a, b, 2013). Table 1 describes each one of the five core elements.

Scholars have used this framework in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South America to carry out a detailed document analysis process to identify the policies’ main characteristics and gaps under the integrated lenses of the model (Bretag et al., 2011a, b; Mahmud, 2023; Miron et al., 2021; Möller, 2022; Moya, 2023; Stoesz et al., 2019; Stoesz & Eaton, 2020). These studies show variations in terms of access, approach, responsibility, detail, and support across higher education systems. Cross-examination of these studies highlights that local interpretations of academic integrity, academic integrity research, characteristics of the respective higher education sectors, and leadership initiatives undertaken by key stakeholders significantly influence academic integrity policies.

In this study, we use the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity policy as interconnected lenses that can guide an examination of current Chilean academic integrity policies. We aim to propose some recommendations for their improvement in contributing to stronger academic integrity cultures and address current Chilean higher education leaders’ concerns.

Table 1 Five Core Elements of Exemplary Academic Integrity*

Elements	Description
Access	This element focuses on identifying if the policy documents were easy to find. Also, it frames the researcher's analysis to recognize if the policy document was both succinct and understandable from the perspective of all stakeholders. Moreover, this element relates to the easiness of identifying the text classification (e.g., policy, procedure, rules, codes of conduct, and others), the presence of links to supplementary resources, and information about the dates when the documents were approved and made effective and their review cycles.
Approach	This element invites assessing to what extent the policy documents contained an upfront and consistent message showing the systematic and sustained commitment of the institution to the values and practices of academic integrity. It also involves recognizing if the documents transmit the educational support needed to teach, learn, and live by the values of academic integrity.
Responsibility	This element helps understanding if the policy documents reveal a shared responsibility to all the stakeholders of an educational community. Researchers can identify if the policy includes responsibilities for students, teachers, professional staff, and senior managers. Traditional approaches tend to focus on students' responsibilities only.
Detail	This element orients towards discerning if the policy documents are extensive when describing breaches, outcomes, levels of severity, and processes concerning identifying breaches, reporting, academic misconduct investigations, confidentiality, and appeals. It might also include examining if the document describes the contextual factors surrounding academic integrity breaches.
Support	This element emphasizes looking for aspects representing proactive and embedded systems to implement the policy, which helps expand understanding of policy. Examples of support are educational resources and professional development opportunities.

*Based on the works of Bretag et al. (2011a, b, 2013), and Bretag and Mahmud (2016)

Methods

Selection of Chilean Universities

We examined documents addressing academic integrity of forty-three accredited universities that satisfied the quality criteria established by the Chilean National System of Quality Assurance across three dimensions in 2021. These forty-three universities conformed to the following criteria: a) teaching and outcomes of the formation process, b) strategic management and institutional resources, c) internal quality assurance and community engagement, and d) research, creation and/or innovation (CNA, 2021). The roster of accredited institutions ($n=43$) encompassed universities from three differentiated sub-systems: 14 state universities created by *Law n° 21.094* (CUECH, 2021); 12 non-state universities included in the Chilean Council of University Presidents; and 17 private universities. This list of institutions represented 73% of the universities in Chile. In 2021, the Chilean Ministry of Education acknowledged 59 universities in the country (MINEDUC, 2021).

Selection of Documents

This search included documents that addressed academic integrity at the institutional level from the forty-three accredited universities. Following Bretag et al. (2011a), we excluded policies developed for specific departments and programs. The first search (May 10, 2021 – May 29, 2021) was conducted by the authors using the terms “*integridad académica*”

(academic integrity in English) and “*integridad*” (integrity) using the universities’ website web search function when available and yielded ten documents from five universities.

Before the second search (May 30, 2021 – October 28, 2021), we realized that some universities’ regulations sections contained explicit references to academic integrity breaches, their sanctions, and investigation procedures. Therefore, we searched for institutional web pages containing these university’s regulations. When the regulations’ web pages were not easily accessible, we used the term “*reglamento*” (regulations in English) in the universities’ web search function. The second search resulted in fifty-four documents from twenty-six universities.

In the third search (November 2, 2021 – February 2, 2022), we used Google’s search bar using the terms “*reglamento*” (regulations, in English) or “*reglamento estudiantes*” (student regulations, in English) and the name of the universities whose policy was not readily available through the previous searches, allowing us to capture fifteen more documents from twelve universities.

Data Collection and Analysis

We used the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity policy to analyze the documents identified in the search process (Bretag et al., 2011a, b, 2013). Under the criterion of *access*, we recorded information about the self-defined document type, the original and latest approval and the effective dates and review cycles. Following the *approach* criterion, we registered if the documents represented a punitive or educative approach. For those combining elements of both approaches, we developed the category mixed. In the case of the *responsibility* criterion, we identified the intended audience, for example, if the documents’ audience was administrators, faculty, staff, students, librarians, or the entire educational community. When analyzing *detail*, we extracted the types of academic integrity breaches from each document. Following Stoesz et al. (2019), we also carried out a separate analysis for direct or indirect reference to contract cheating. For *support*, we searched for educational development opportunities for diverse stakeholders. The researchers in Canada and Chile used a teleconference platform to align criteria and clarify methodological questions during the data collection and analysis processes. All data were recorded in an Excel spreadsheet.

Results

We codified the documents that addressed academic integrity according to self-defined titles provided by the selected universities. As a result of this inquiry, we identified one policy, four codes of ethics, and seventy-four regulations from forty-three accredited institutions. The only self-defined policy document provided a presentation section, an executive summary, an introduction, insight into the guidelines that inspired the policy, the institutional academic integrity definition, a description of the values the policy seeks to promote, the approach that informed policy development, descriptions of the roles of various stakeholders, some guidelines for the administration of policy and the main institutional course of actions for promoting an academic integrity culture. The four codes of ethics were diverse in style. Three were written in legal language and organized in articles, and one was presented as a document with sections explaining the institutional expectations

using formal language. These four codes of ethics shared explicit references to the values or principles that institutions hoped to protect and the sanctions that their audiences would face when failing to comply with them. As for the regulations, the structure was also varied. However, they were all written in legal language and organized in articles. Likewise, they provided information about academic integrity breaches, sanctions, and procedures. Table 2 provides further details.

Access

We located 19% ($n=15$) of the seventy-nine documents outside the universities' websites through a Google search (i.e., the third search). Also, we found 81% ($n=64$) of the documents inside universities' websites (i.e., the first and second searches). In most cases, the researchers found the retrieval process challenging for those documents inside the universities' websites. We could not always intuitively identify the path to access policy when navigating the universities' websites. Also, when conducting these web searches on institutional web pages, the results included news and invitations to institutional activities, demanding a screening process. The retrieval process of the documents during data collection was challenging. Furthermore, we realized that reading the documents required an understanding of legal language. Only two documents (i.e., one self-identified code of ethics and one self-identified policy document) were written in a language that a diverse range of readers could understand. The accessibility of most documents, considering both their availability and comprehensibility, appeared insufficient.

Regarding effective dates, fifty-eight documents included at least the month and year (*Range*: December 1983 – August 2021), and five documents registered only the year when the rules became effective (*Range*: 1987 –2021). Sixteen documents did not have any date reference. Moreover, none of the documents had information about the subsequent review process. The absence of comprehensive data on review cycles hindered the estimation of the document assessment timelines.

Approach

We found that 80% of the documents ($n=63$) were informed by a punitive approach to academic integrity. We coded these documents under this category when they highlighted sanctions and investigation procedures without referring to principles or positively framed words. The documents analyzed demonstrated a mixed approach, integrating both punitive and educational strategies, in 19% ($n=15$) of the documents. The documents informed by a mixed approach outlined punitive elements in sections that addressed academic integrity breaches, sanctions, levels of severity of the breaches, and investigation procedures. In contrast, the documents also referenced values such as honesty, indicating an educational approach. One policy, distinguished by its sole reliance on an educational approach, included only positively framed words, guiding principles, and strategies to enhance the success of community stakeholders.

We also detected seven institutions with policy documents addressing academic integrity using different approaches. Table 3 shows the list of institutions, documents, and approaches.

Table 2 List of the Academic Integrity Policy Documents from Chilean Universities (Self-Defined)

Universities	Policy	Code of ethics	Regulations	Total
1. Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	1		4	5
2. Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso			1	1
3. Universidad Academia Humanismo Cristiano			1	1
4. Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez		1		1
5. Universidad Adventista de Chile			1	1
6. Universidad Alberto Hurtado			2	2
7. Universidad Andrés Bello			4	4
8. Universidad Arturo Prat			1	1
9. Universidad Austral de Chile			2	2
10. Universidad Autónoma de Chile		1	4	5
11. Universidad Bernardo O'Higgins			3	3
12. Universidad Católica Cardenal Silva Henríquez			3	3
13. Universidad Católica de la Santísima Concepción			1	1
14. Universidad Católica de Temuco			1	1
15. Universidad Católica del Maule			1	1
16. Universidad Católica del Norte			1	1
17. Universidad Central de Chile		1	1	2
18. Universidad de Antofagasta			1	1
19. Universidad de Artes, Ciencias y Comunicación UNIACC			1	1
20. Universidad de Atacama			1	1
21. Universidad de Chile			2	2
22. Universidad de Concepción			2	2
23. Universidad de la Frontera			1	1
24. Universidad de las Américas			1	1
25. Universidad de los Andes			2	2
26. Universidad de los Lagos			1	1
27. Universidad de Magallanes			1	1
28. Universidad de Playa Ancha de Ciencias de la Educación			1	1
29. Universidad de Santiago de Chile			3	3
30. Universidad de Talca			2	2
31. Universidad de Valparaíso			1	1
32. Universidad de Viña del Mar			2	2
33. Universidad del Bío Bío			1	1
34. Universidad del Desarrollo			4	4
35. Universidad Diego Portales			1	1
36. Universidad Finis Terrae		1	5	6
37. Universidad Mayor			2	2
38. Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación			1	1
39. Universidad San Sebastián			2	2
40. Universidad Santo Tomás			2	2
41. Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María			1	1
42. Universidad Tecnológica de Chile INACAP			1	1
43. Universidad de Tarapacá			1	1
Total	1	4	74	79

Responsibility

We identified that documents addressing academic integrity focused on students as the primary target audience in 95% ($n=75$). These documents provided further insight into behaviours and classified breaches into categories such as minor, serious, and very serious. Explicit references concerning the responsibilities of faculty members were predominantly related to the application of sanctions; at the same time, the application of these sanctions initiated processes involving higher authorities to either endorse or impose more severe sanctions ($n=21$). Only two documents communicated the institutional expectations for faculty to guide students.

Detail

The documents presented descriptions of academic integrity breaches, which we organized into eight codes to identify that the most mentioned were “umbrella expressions for different types of breaches,” “plagiarism,” and “exam cheating.” We used the code “umbrella expressions for different types of breaches” when we detected broad descriptions. Table 4 provides an example for each category and the frequencies and percentages.

Support

The analysis showed that only two documents described support concerning academic integrity. One policy document included a section on the development of educational strategies. In this policy, we found the design of a study about the most frequent breaches, the design and implementation of guidelines to integrate academic integrity in the programs, the creation of educational resources about academic integrity oriented to students and resources to support faculty and teaching assistants. The second document, in its rules for undergraduate students, established that faculty should supervise students in their education path.

Discussion

We present this discussion on the academic integrity policy in Chilean universities based on the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity policy. Figure 1 synthesizes key interconnected recommendations to improve Chilean universities' academic integrity policies. The subsequent subsections of this discussion offer a more comprehensive explanation of these recommendations.

Access

Academic integrity scholars recognize equitable and easy access to academic integrity policy as an exemplary element (Stoesz et al., 2019). All Chilean universities' academic integrity documents were challenging to locate. On some occasions, they took more than three clicks to find, and in other instances, only a search via an online search engine facilitated retrieval. In Bretag et al. (2011b) study, only 15% of policies were challenging to locate. The literature suggests that institutions prioritize easy access to policy (Bretag et al.,

Table 3 Universities with Academic Integrity Policy Documents Framed on Diverse Approaches

Universities	Types of Policy Documents	Mixed (Educative and Punitive)	Educative	Punitive	Total
1. Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	Policy ($n=1$) Regulations ($n=4$)		1	4	5
2. Universidad Andrés Bello	Regulations ($n=4$)	2		2	4
3. Universidad Austral de Chile	Regulations ($n=2$)	1		1	2
4. Universidad Autónoma de Chile	Code of ethics ($n=1$) Regulations ($n=4$)	2		3	5
5. Universidad Católica Cardenal Silva Henríquez	Regulations ($n=3$)	1		2	3
6. Universidad Central de Chile	Code of ethics ($n=1$) Regulations ($n=1$)	1		1	2
7. Universidad de Chile	Regulations ($n=2$)	1		1	2

Table 4 Categories of Academic Integrity Breaches Identified in the Documents of (n = 79)

Type of misconduct	Examples (Translated into English from Spanish)	Frequency	Percentage (Approximate values)
1. Umbrella expressions for different types of breaches	- "The student who, with any duly accredited act, vitiates an academic evaluation."	47	59%
2. Plagiarism	- "Use a work, either individual or collaborative, of another student, an official, staff, assistant, professor or authority of the University, without their consent, to obtain an economic benefit or public recognition."	44	56%
3. Falsifying academic records	- "Forgery of any document."	37	47%
4. Exam cheating	- "Cheating in tests or exams, as well as allowing copying."	31	39%
5. Impersonation	- "Impersonate a student in an academic evaluation or allow impersonation."	23	29%
6. Contract Cheating (Indirect)	- "Committing fraud to obtain academic evaluation results that would otherwise be inferior."	22	28%
7. Misrepresentation	- "The student agrees to deliver accurate and real data in their work. This guideline implies that the fabrication or falsification of data is considered an infraction of this code."	9	11%
8. Self-plagiarism	- "nor should you present as new a work a report that has already been evaluated."	1	0.01%



Fig. 1 Recommendations for Academic Integrity Policy makers in Chile based on the Five Core Elements of Exemplary Academic Integrity Policy (Bretag et al., 2011a, b)

2011b). Following this, Miron et al. (2021) recommended that policy access take no more than two clicks. When documents are not accessible, not only do students face barriers to understanding expectations, but other stakeholders, such as staff, parents, faculty, and prospective students, also encounter challenges in obtaining access (Stoesz et al., 2019). For this reason, Möller (2022) underscored the decision of one institution to include a link on their homepage that addressed plagiarism and policy and educational resources. Hence, we call on Chilean leaders to find effective ways to facilitate the availability of academic integrity policy documents (Recommendation 1).

Institutions caring about integrity should ensure publicly available and clear statements that describe their strategy (Glendinning, 2022). Students and faculty members can provide evidence of how effectively policy is communicated (Glendinning, 2017). More recently, Davis (2022) underscored the significance of integrating Universal Design for Learning principles into the formulation of academic integrity policies to address issues of inclusion from a learner-centred perspective, such as the use of intricate terminology or a deficiency in clarity. Given that most documents were written in legal language, we advocate

for Chilean institutions to take the initiative to ensure comprehensive accessibility for all stakeholders (Recommendation 2).

Access analysis also focused on effective and review dates. We identified that 34% of the documents ($n=27$) were dated between 1983 and 2016. Experts recommend a revision of policy every five years to ensure responsiveness (Glendinning, 2022; Guruge & Kadel, 2023). Difficulties may emerge for institutions seeking to address new forms of student misconduct with policies that have remained static for more than a decade. None of the documents provided information about policy review dates. This absence aligns with the results of a policy analysis conducted in South America (Moya, 2023). Conversely, these results are in stark contrast with those from a study undertaken in Canada, which revealed that approximately half of the scrutinized documents incorporate either policy review dates or information regarding the review cycle (Stoesz & Eaton, 2020). Nowadays, educational institutions face the emergence of a transactional approach to learning (Bretag et al., 2019). Moreover, institutions could face the presence of contract cheating and file-sharing services (Comas-Forgas et al., 2020; Lancaster & Cotarlan, 2021), the challenges of the unauthorized use of artificial intelligence tools that can write text with little input on behalf of the students (Foltýnek et al., 2023; Kumar et al., 2022; TEQSA, 2019), and other new threats (Glendinning, 2022). We contend that Chilean institutions should aim to include and implement review cycles in policy documents (Recommendation 3). This action could increase universities' chances of addressing emerging issues in a timely manner (Eaton, 2021; Möller, 2022).

Despite the challenges with access to academic integrity policy and the potential problems associated with a lack of information with review cycles, this analysis showed that most Chilean universities had developed documents to address academic integrity. This foundation holds relevance as certain bodies within the European Union have yet to establish academic integrity policies or related documentation (Cerdà-Navarro et al., 2022; Foltýnek & Glendinning, 2015; Glendinning, 2017).

Approach

In this study, most documents focused on unethical behaviours using negatively framed words ($n=79\%$). In a study encompassing twelve universities across South America, Moya (2023) found that half of the documents exhibited a punitive approach. Previous studies in Aotearoa New Zealand and Canada located negatively framed words, such as *dishonesty* and *misconduct*, in almost a third of the analyzed documents (Miron et al., 2021; Möller, 2022; Stoesz & Eaton, 2020). The punitive approach is still prevalent in many higher education systems across various regions of the world (Bertram Gallant, 2008; Bretag et al., 2011a; Cullen, 2022).

A study developed by Glendinning et al. (2019) showed that the number of institutions using the educational approach is limited. Experts argue that transitioning into an educational approach is a complex endeavour as it requires multiple individual, departmental, and institutional efforts for deep transformation (Bretag & Mahmud, 2016; Bretag et al., 2019; Kenny & Eaton, 2022). Academic integrity policy designed under the educational approach seeks to impact leadership and microcultures, learning spaces, pedagogies and technologies, scholarship, and professional learning and training (Kenny & Eaton, 2022; Verhoef et al., 2022). Despite its multiple benefits, we surmise implementation of it for some institutions might be extremely challenging. Mahmud's (2023) analysis shed light on a sustainable pathway designed to create momentum for

a transition towards the educational approach at a system level. Mahmud (2023) noted significant increases in the adoption of the educational approach in Australia over a decade, resulting from “collective action by multiple stakeholders including universities, academia, and the regulator” (p. 836). Following the case of Australia, we identify that greater collaboration among Chilean universities, academia, and the National Accreditation Commission to leverage efforts can raise the status of academic integrity in the Chilean higher education system (Recommendation 4).

Given the ongoing technological advancements that potentially facilitate academic dishonesty, a transition to an educational approach may be necessary. We surmise it would be arduous and impractical to attempt to detect every misconduct case. In a landscape where detection has been extremely challenged, Glendinning’s (2022) recommendation to go beyond detection and academic misconduct procedures gains relevance. A stronger focus on technologies for cheating detection has led to an arms race with controversial results (Anson, 2022). With this, we do not imply that Chilean institutions should exclude text-matching software or Learning Management System data since these tools can help in plagiarism investigations (Glendinning, 2013). Only focusing on misconduct after its occurrence is impractical. The development of long-lasting and proactive strategies that uphold integrity emerges as a more effective approach. These strategies should align with the values of all community members (Recommendation 5).

Only one document used the educational approach. This document emphasized the importance of academic integrity and its corresponding values and offered mechanisms to achieve it (Bretag et al., 2011a, b). It delineated the educational and communication strategies to promote academic integrity. These elements highlight the institutional conditions for learning with integrity (Bertram Gallant, 2008; Morris & Caroll, 2016). Additionally, this policy fostered a shared sense of responsibility (Kenny & Eaton, 2022; Sureda-Negre et al., 2016). It provided a detailed outline of various institutional roles and responsibilities. This policy also offered a structure for addressing academic integrity breaches in ways that incentivized accountability and learning (Bertram Gallant, 2017; Bretag & Mahmud, 2016; Cullen, 2022). In this regard, several alternatives warrant further exploration. These alternatives encompass teachable moments, during which faculty help students transition from cheating to learning (Bertram Gallant, 2017). Another strategy involves integrating restorative justice into academic integrity policy, which may present opportunities to repair harm (Cullen, 2022; Moriarty & Wilson, 2022).

We noted documents that mixed components of the punitive and the educational approaches. This analysis shows that 19% ($n=15$) of the documents represented this approach, which aligns with findings in Australia and Canada (Bretag et al., 2011b; Stoesz & Eaton, 2020). We also identified institutions with multiple institutional policy documents informed by different approaches. For instance, one university had three documents for Master’s and Ph.D. students. Two mixed the punitive and educational approaches, and one was developed under the punitive approach. The mixed approach could reflect a step in between that provides institutions with an initial level of experience to address academic integrity in a new way. However, we ponder the implications of using different approaches in policy documents since sharing mixed messages could confuse students, faculty, staff, librarians, and administrators during policy implementation.

Responsibility

Exemplary policies involve all stakeholders, even those beyond institutional boundaries, such as parents and friends (Bretag et al., 2011b). In this inquiry, 95% of the documents

focused on students' conduct only. In Bretag et al. (2011b), only one university declared that academic integrity was everyone's responsibility. Policy analysis studies showed that 21% to 46% of the universities held students responsible for upholding academic integrity (Bretag et al., 2011b; Stoesz et al., 2019). We identified a significant gap between students' responsibilities without explicit institutional support and the instructors' or other authorities' power to apply sanctions or inform higher authorities.

The exclusive focus on student conduct implies an underlying punitive approach (Eaton, 2021). Transition into an educational approach drives multi-stakeholder involvement. Cerdà-Navarro et al. (2022) have advocated for a more comprehensive strategy, one that includes not only students but also staff members. Glendinning (2022) recommends making explicit how staff members' cases should be addressed in policy. Senior management's conduct is also critical as they are institutional role models (Glendinning, 2017). The evidence suggests that institutions both in Australia and South Africa strive to hold all individuals accountable (QAA, 2020; UA, 2017; Verhoef et al., 2022). Therefore, leaders of Chilean institutions should strive to involve all stakeholders in upholding academic integrity (Recommendation 6).

The inclusion of Students as Partners (SaP) in academic integrity policy development is a best practice (Cerdà-Navarro et al., 2022; Glendinning, 2017, 2022; Richards et al., 2016). Students should be drivers and not recipients of academic integrity initiatives (Richards et al., 2016). Universities could actively involve students in policy implementation and educational activities that support academic integrity skills (e.g., Kenny & Eaton, 2022; Verhoef et al., 2022). With this, students could develop a sense of shared responsibility, decrease feelings of distrust, and become advocates who promote academic integrity values. Ayala-Enríquez et al. (2020) study found that students resisting academic misconduct became an inspiration to their peers. Involving SaP in policy development and implementation may play a crucial role in promoting a culture of academic integrity (Recommendation 7).

Detail

While reviewing the documents, we identified broad expressions that could encompass various kinds of misconduct. These expressions were presented in ways that explicitly mentioned reliance on the experience of authorities or instructors to either report them or apply sanctions. We called them *umbrella expressions for different types of breaches*. We identified that 59% ($n=47$) of the Chilean policies included sentences or phrases representing this category. Although these expressions might bring flexibility and potentially reflect an interest in keeping a more enduring relevance over the years, they might not offer clear guidelines for action, endanger the transparency of investigations, or hide the necessary language required to discuss academic integrity breaches more deeply (Eaton, 2017; Stoesz et al., 2019). The presence of general descriptions of cheating can also complicate intentions to ensure consistency at an institutional level (Guruge & Kadel, 2023). Consistency is connected to the value of dependability and is critical because, with it, members of the community know what to expect and can, therefore, trust in the process outcomes (Moriarty & Wilson, 2022). A clear differentiation of each type of academic misconduct can help promote consistency (Recommendation 8).

We also detected a high number of references to *plagiarism*. Most policy documents referenced this kind of breach, which parallels the findings in other studies in Aoteroa

New Zealand, Canada, and the United Kingdom (Glendinning, 2013; Möller, 2022; Stoesz et al., 2019). Definitions of plagiarism in the documents were varied, and this reality might limit possibilities for common understanding across the Chilean higher education system and ultimately blur plagiarism's definition. Clear definitions might also be helpful in addressing what Adam (2016) identified as the gaps between official definitions of plagiarism and personal interpretations of it. The lack of common standards in plagiarism definitions is also prevalent in other regions (Glendinning, 2013), which emphasizes the imperative for educational leaders to create networks that facilitate knowledge mobilization (Recommendation 9).

Only one document used the concept of contract cheating in a footnote but did not define it. Contract cheating is a “form of academic misconduct when a person uses an undeclared and/or unauthorized third party to assist them to produce work for academic credit or progression, whether or not payment or other favour is involved” (Tauginienė et al., 2018, p. 14). Approximately 28% of the documents in this study included definitions that correspond with the conceptualization of contract cheating. These documents overtly tackle the matter of unauthorized collaboration during assessments. This finding suggests that these indirect allusions do not denote the presence of commercial contract cheating. Contract cheating, essay mills or ghostwriting has been previously identified as a type of misconduct that is not seen as a major concern for accreditation or quality assurance agencies (Glendinning et al., 2019). The explicit inclusion of contract cheating in academic integrity documents could protect various stakeholders from the risks associated with it, including blackmail and the implications of masking their skills (Glendinning, 2022; Yorke et al., 2020). Robust approaches to contract cheating also include policies and procedures that provide grounds to centralize information to allow for pattern and trend analysis on writing styles and assessment performance (Guruge & Kadel, 2023). Australia, Ireland, and England currently have legislation against contract cheating (Glendinning, 2022), which emphasizes that this issue is complex and requires to be addressed in ways that go beyond institutional policy. Contract cheating requires a response that transcends institutional policy.

Glendinning et al. (2019) posited that accreditation and quality assurance bodies ought to actively guide educational institutions' stakeholders in keeping pace with emerging risks. Researchers have identified the potential unethical uses of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) (Anson, 2022; Foltýnek et al., 2023; Kumar et al., 2022; Lancaster, 2023). Attention to new developments in the area and understanding of the ethical implications of GenAI is critical for integrity. Given the risks associated with contract cheating and the unethical use of GenAI, it becomes essential to integrate guidelines addressing these issues into policy within the contemporary higher education context (Recommendation 10).

Support

This analysis showed that 97% of policy documents did not provide specific support for students, which matches Stoesz et al.'s (2019) results in Canada, showing that most academic integrity policies did not provide this information. Evidence regarding academic integrity support has also been collected through surveys. A study conducted by Foltýnek and Glendinning (2015) within the European Union unveiled disparities in academic integrity training across various European nations. Certain nations reported that over 75% of their student population acknowledged the presence of academic integrity training. Conversely, less than one-third of students in other nations reported having access

to such training. The study developed by Glendinning et al. (2017) in Southern Europe indicated that all participants expected an improvement in the delivery of academic integrity information and training for all students and faculty members. In their recent research, Cerdà-Navarro et al. (2022) discovered that 42.2% of the doctoral candidates involved in the study had participated in a training programme specifically designed to enhance academic and research integrity within the Spanish context. In a scholarly investigation conducted in Chile, González-Acuña et al. (2023) found that only three of nine doctoral education programs provided instruction to students in research ethics or academic integrity. The policy is reinforced when all stakeholders, including educators and learners, are provided with clear opportunities for academic integrity training (Eaton, 2017; Glendinning, 2013). Support remains an area of improvement not only in Chile but also in other countries. Thus, the provision of institutional support to educational stakeholders for developing their skills in bolstering academic integrity cultures should be included in policy (Recommendation 11).

Scholars focusing on academic integrity propose several strategies. These include centralizing academic integrity resources, appointing Educational Leaders in Residence with an academic integrity portfolio, establishing a Community of Practice of Academic Integrity, creating Academic Integrity Offices (AIO), and developing a variety of both formal and informal opportunities that cover a wide range of topics and skills (Guruge & Kadel, 2023; Kenny & Eaton, 2022; Sefcik et al., 2020). Experts also recommend academic integrity policymakers focus on academic integrity skills capacity building relevant to the students' characteristics, community stakeholders' understanding of academic integrity policy and values, and educational opportunities for staff conducting academic misconduct cases (Cerdà-Navarro et al., 2022; Glendinning, 2017, 2022; Guruge & Kadel, 2023; Sefcik et al., 2020; Striepe et al., 2023). The body of literature on academic integrity encompasses a diverse range of experiences related to support. Therefore, it is advisable to prioritize those support strategies when developing support for academic integrity policy (Recommendation 12).

Limitations

We acknowledge that this study focused on publicly available documents pertaining to academic integrity from 43 accredited universities in 2021. Consequently, not all the designed elements to deal with academic integrity or academic misconduct in Chilean higher institutions were contained in this inquiry. This study does not provide insight into policy implementation or alignment of academic integrity policy and practice (e.g., Foltýnek & Glendinning, 2015; Glendinning, 2013, 2014, 2017). Moreover, it does not shed light on the level of alignment across institutions in their understanding of the breaches' severity or the application of sanctions (e.g., Sureda-Negre et al., 2020), the role of national governments in guiding educational institutions' efforts to uphold academic integrity (e.g., Glendinning, 2022; Glendinning et al., 2017), or perspectives regarding the Universal Design for Learning lens to analyze policy (Davis, 2022).

Given that both authors of this work are proficient in Spanish, language was not a barrier to this analysis. However, we acknowledge that the previous policy analysis work we consulted in framing and designing our study was presented in English from

Anglo-heritage countries, and as such, we recognize there is a need to develop further educational policy analysis from other contexts, such as Latin America.

Directions for Future Research

Academic integrity researchers could explore the alignment between policy development and implementation. Understanding how educational leaders promote a shared understanding of academic integrity across institutions and nations could be critical. Analyzing the impacts of universities' academic integrity policies on students' learning could also be another avenue of exploration. These studies could potentially become of interest to a larger audience as they might showcase universities' role in supporting students' learning for ethical decision-making.

Directions for Future Practice

Considerations for practice emerging from this research might include creating spaces incentivizing academic integrity dialogues among students, scholars, educators, and policymakers. Policy development requires participation from various stakeholders, especially students (Bertram Gallant, 2008; Bretag & Mahmud, 2016; Cerdà-Navarro et al., 2022). Students are the future, and their understanding and enactment of academic integrity values, even when no one is watching, can contribute to building a more ethical future for educational communities and society at large. Their exclusion in academic integrity policy development has no place under the educational approach.

Other related recommendations for future practice include those suggested by Bretag and Mahmud (2016) and Bertram Gallant (2022), such as staff development/education, the creation of academic integrity groups or committees, the development of a centralized web area for academic integrity, the presence of academic integrity structural resources, the creation of more robust connections with student organizations, and the implementation of strategies to inform and educate educational community members in ways that resonate with their needs. Access to information helps with accountability and the promotion of best practices. It helps span the boundaries of contexts where academic integrity practices are still developing.

Within the Chilean context, another direction for future practice could involve building a common framework of academic integrity standards with consistent definitions. Additionally, we identify opportunities to study the current status of institutional strategies and mechanisms that align academic integrity work in universities with the National Commission of Accreditation. A better understanding of these connections could facilitate expanding this system's role in ensuring academic integrity and research integrity.

Conclusion

In this study, we shared the outcomes of policy analysis of documents addressing academic integrity aspects at 43 accredited universities in Chile. Policy is considered a critical first step towards building robust academic integrity cultures as it can influence

various dimensions of educational processes. We conducted this analysis using the five exemplary elements of academic integrity policy. These elements provided a lens to explore areas of improvement for the benefit of stakeholders seeking to enhance the current regulatory framework to address academic integrity in the Chilean higher education sector. In this study, we also aimed to provide a comparative international perspective by juxtaposing these specific findings with those of other policy analyses and surveys conducted in other regions of the world. An advocacy standpoint underpins this analysis. We believe the outcomes of this examination can contribute to current dialogues intended to improve universities' responses to the new threats to academic integrity. Collective efforts can promote the highest ethical standards in various educational communities.

We struggled to *access* academic integrity policies on universities' websites, realized that these were written in legal language, which might not be accessible to all students and did not find information regarding policy review cycles. Also, the *approach* most policies followed was the punitive one with a strong focus on breaches, sanctions, and investigation procedures. Indications of strategic collaborations or mechanisms to uphold integrity were absent. As for *responsibility*, we detected that policies centred on student conduct. Most documents did not provide opportunities for student engagement. The level of *detail* provided by universities when describing academic integrity breaches was broad and did not always provide clear categories or definitions. We identified inconsistencies in plagiarism definitions. Additionally, we noted a lack of guidance for stakeholders to deal with emerging issues, such as contract cheating and the unethical use of GenAI. We observed a lack of reference *support* strategies that could help stakeholders teach, learn, and research with integrity. The majority of the documents did not display indications of research-based strategies. These gaps represent new opportunities for policy development and dialogues across Chilean universities that could also inform actions in other regions of the world.

The persistent impact of the punitive approach remains evident in various regions, as highlighted by the focus on student conduct and the intricacies of engaging diverse stakeholders. This study has yielded twelve recommendations for policy improvement, each possessing the capacity to contribute to the essential transformations in higher education systems, both in Chile and on a global scale. These recommendations have stemmed from the five core elements of exemplary academic integrity. This framework can adapt effectively to settings with characteristics differing from those for which it was initially designed. Consequently, researchers examining academic integrity may find this framework advantageous to use in regions where such examination has not yet been undertaken. Leaders are encouraged to participate in such initiatives to develop recommendations with local significance that could potentially resonate with international audiences. The adoption of a global perspective could ultimately aid in the development of more robust strategies to address the current and emerging challenges to academic integrity through policy.

Acknowledgements The authors acknowledge the invaluable insights of Jessica Ayala and Natasha Kenny in the development of this work.

Funding The Chilean National Agency of Development and Research supported this work through their Doctorate Abroad Scholarship program (n°72210065).

Data Availability Data are publicly available via this website: <https://osf.io/muzj5>.

Declarations

Competing Interests The authors report that there are no competing interests to declare.

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