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# An Exploration of Faculty Attitudes Toward Student Academic Dishonesty in Selected Canadian Universities

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UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

An Exploration of Faculty Attitudes Toward Student Academic Dishonesty

in Selected Canadian Universities

by

Paul Douglas MacLeod

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## **ABSTRACT**

This work explores faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty in Canada by means of a qualitative review of seventeen selected universities' academic dishonesty policies combined with a quantitative survey of faculty attitudes and behaviors around academic integrity and dishonesty. The data is integrated in the interpretation phase to give depth and breadth to the analysis. The study found that a majority of the faculty members who responded to the survey believe that academic dishonesty is a problem at their institutions and is a problem that is getting worse. Generally, faculty members believe their respective institutional policies are sound in principle but fail in application. Two of the major factors identified by faculty members as contributing to academic dishonesty are administrative. Many faculty members report reluctance to formally report academic dishonesty due to excessive burdens of paperwork and proof. Further, they feel unsupported by administration. Two other major factors contributing to a rise in academic dishonesty are related to students. Faculty members in this study cite unprepared students and international students who struggle with language issues and with the differences between the Canadian academic context and that of their home countries as major contributors to academic dishonesty. This study concludes with a number of recommendations for educators and recommendations for future research.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Kent Donlevy and my committee members for all of the time and effort that they have devoted to helping me to complete this project. I would also like to thank my wife Carolyn and my colleagues Sarah Inkpen, Reid McLeod and Amir Abu El- Kheir for taking the time to read my work and offer feedback.

## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to the most important people in my life.

To my wife Carolyn for all of her love, help, and support. Without her, this work would never have been completed.

To my son Connor and my daughter Alysha for tolerating all of the times daddy said: “I can’t right now; I have to work on my dissertation.”

To my mother, Bernice MacLeod, and my father- and mother-in-law, Donald and Beverley Bowden, for all of their encouragement.

To my brother, D’arcy, for accepting with good humor my moaning about the seemingly endless dissertation process.

Finally, to the memories of my brother, Lawrence MacLeod, and my father, Manifold “Manny” MacLeod: *Requiescant in Pace*.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Background of the Problem**

Academic integrity and academic dishonesty have always been areas of professional interest for me as an educator. However, it was not until 2005 that I began to explore the existing research on this topic. While I was teaching English as a Foreign Language to freshman undergraduates (in a remedial skills program designed to help new students achieve a level of competency in English, mathematics, computing, and science that would allow them to succeed in their degree programs) at the Petroleum Institute, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, I became part of the Foundation Program Academic Integrity task force (Petroleum Institute, 2010). This task force was formed to research the current literature on academic integrity and academic dishonesty and recommend ways in which the Foundation Program could more effectively promote academic integrity and deal more equitably and consistently with acts of student academic dishonesty. It struck me at the time that, despite the significant amount of writing on the topics of academic integrity and academic dishonesty, there is a paucity of research on those topics in the Middle East. Further research—originally intended to help perform a comparative study of student self-admitted cheating behavior between students in North America and the Arabian Gulf—revealed a vast amount of literature on the subject in the US and very little research on the topic in Canada (Bertram Gallant, 2008; Christenson Hughes and McCabe, 2006a, 2006b; Park, 2003).

This study is an exploration of the academic dishonesty policies at 17 selected Canadian universities. It involves an analysis of each university's relevant policies and the

attitudes and experiences of selected faculty from each university. It will contribute to the body of knowledge about academic dishonesty in Canada.

### **Significance of the Problem**

#### **A Global Issue**

A perceived lack of academic integrity among students is seen by many educators, and the public, as a serious threat to the fundamental function of educational institutions (e.g., Bertram Gallant, 2008; Bowers, 1964; Davis, Drinan & Bertram Gallant, 2009; Eckstein, 2003; Hallak & Poisson, 2007; McCabe & Bowers, 1994; McCabe & Drinan, 1999; Miller, Murdock, Anderman, & Poindexter, 2007; Vandehey, Diekhoff & LaBeff, 2007). Further, academic cheating by students has become regular fodder for the popular press around the world. At the University of Virginia more than 60 students were found to have plagiarized large portions of their major term papers after a professor responding to complaints of cheating analyzed the papers using a computer program (Schemo, 2001). This was particularly significant, as the school has a long history of using an honor code system that emphasizes trust and reliance on personal standards of honor (for example, exams are conducted without invigilation). Three students had their diplomas revoked as a result of the investigation of this issue (Young, 2001). Wasley (2007) recounts an incident in which 46 University of Indiana second-year dentistry students were disciplined (and nine expelled) when half of the second-year class was involved in a plot to hack into a secure computer to view test materials before taking their final exams. A search of the *Shanghai Daily* newspaper (China) archives for “cheating on exams” revealed dozens of stories dating from 2004 about academic cheating, students being caught and the measures educators and the Chinese government were taking (including criminalizing academic

cheating) to encourage honesty (2010, September 8). Venkat (2006) detailed numerous cheating scandals in the USA, India, South Korea, and the UK. The Chief Disciplinary Officer at Oxford University, UK, was quoted in *The Guardian* as saying plagiarism was prevalent at Oxford and was threatening the value of Oxford degrees (Smith, 2006). Recently, Harvard endured a cheating scandal in which 125 students were accused of cheating (plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration) on a take-home exam. The “Harvard cheating scandal,” as it is known, made headlines three times: first when the story broke (Perez-Pena, 2012); again when it was revealed that the university violated its own privacy rules by discussing the case in the press (Levick, 2012); and finally when faculty members discovered that the administration had hacked into the email accounts of 16 resident deans (Perez-Pena, 2013). The international nature of the problem has been noted by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which has contributed to the discussion of declining standards of academic integrity with publications such as “Ethics and Corruption in Education” (Hallak & Poisson, 2001); “Combating Academic Fraud: Towards a Culture of Integrity” (Eckstein, 2003); and “Corrupt Schools, Corrupt Universities: What Can be Done?” (Hallak & Poisson, 2007).

### **The Canadian Situation**

In Canada, Christenson Hughes and McCabe’s landmark 2006 study of academic dishonesty in universities generated both media and academic responses. On February 7, 2007, the *McLean’s* magazine headline read: “The great university cheating scandal: With more than 50 per cent of students cheating, university degrees are losing their value” (Gulli, Kohler, & Patriquin, 2007). The Canadian Council on Learning’s 2010 report, “Liars, Fraudsters and Cheats: Dealing With the Growth of Academic Dishonesty,” refers

to Christenson Hughes and McCabe's research to support its claims about the prevalence of cheating by Canadian students. Neufeld and Dianda's (2007) stated reasons for surveying academic dishonesty policy and procedures at Ontario universities (p. 1) are

- the authors' own experiences with academic dishonesty as teachers and administrators;
- the surge in media attention to problems of academic dishonesty in Canada; and
- the studies of academic misconduct in Canada by Christenson Hughes and McCabe (2006a, 2006b).

Nevertheless, academic dishonesty has not been thoroughly explored in Canada (Christenson Hughes & McCabe, 2006a; 2006b). This assertion was borne out by the literature search for this study which, in addition to Christenson Hughes and McCabe's work and the report by Neufeld and Dianda (2007), referred to above, revealed only a handful of master's theses (e.g., Zubick, 1997) and journal articles (e.g., Bertram Gallant & Drinan, 2008; Jurdi, Hage, & Chow, 2011; McGill, 2008). Christenson Hughes and McCabe (2006a) assert that "we need to identify how Canadian colleges and universities are responding to academic misconduct when it does occur and what strategies have proven most successful" (p. 59). In addition, despite the preponderance of recent research on academic dishonesty, "Little research, however, has focused on faculty roles in student cheating" (Volpe, Davidson & Bell, 2008, p. 164).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Whitley and Keith-Spiegel (2001b) believe that an effective academic dishonesty policy must be individualized to meet the unique needs of each individual institution, yet contain “the essential elements of an effective [academic dishonesty] policy” (p. 325). In examining institutional responses to academic dishonesty, Bertram Gallant (2008) classifies the most common approaches into two categories: rule compliance (i.e., deterrence) and integrity. She also recognizes that some institutions use a combination of these two approaches (pp. 34-46; 87-101).

This study will add to the literature on student academic dishonesty in Canada in three ways: (1) by analyzing the academic dishonesty policy of each of 17 selected Canadian universities in terms of Whitley and Keith-Spiegel’s criteria (and assigning them to categories based on the analysis); (2) by classifying the institutional policy response to student academic dishonesty at those Canadian universities according to Bertram Gallant’s taxonomy; and (3) by conducting a survey of selected faculty members at each of the 17 Canadian universities in the study to examine faculty attitudes and beliefs around the effectiveness of their institution’s academic dishonesty policy.

### **Research Questions**

This work will answer the following five research questions with regard to each of the 17 universities selected for the study and selected faculty members from each institution:

1. Do the institution’s academic dishonesty policies focus on integrity or rule compliance (i.e., deterrence) or a combination of the two?

2. How do the academic dishonesty policies of each of the selected universities compare to the framework for an effective policy advocated by Whitley and Keith-Spiegel?
3. What are typical faculty attitudes and beliefs about student academic dishonesty?
4. What are typical faculty beliefs about their institutions' policies surrounding student academic dishonesty?
5. Is there a relationship between institutional policy and faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty?

### **Significance of the Study**

This work will be a significant addition to the literature on academic dishonesty in Canada. It will be the first study to evaluate the academic dishonesty policies of a selection of universities from across Canada in terms of policy content. Further, it will investigate Canadian faculty members' attitudes and beliefs about student academic dishonesty and their respective institution's response to the issue.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Academic integrity.** "Academic integrity is commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility" (Fundamental Values Project, 1999, p. 4). Although *honesty* and *integrity* are not synonymous, the FVP definition incorporates *honesty* into the definition and thus, the terms *academic integrity* and *academic honesty* will be used synonymously here.

**Academic dishonesty.** Behavior (or a combination of behaviors) that contravenes the principles of academic integrity. In practice, academically dishonest actions are

normally defined individually. The most common examples of academic dishonesty are indicated below.

***Cheating.*** “Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term *academic exercise* [emphasis added] includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours” (Pavela, 1978).

***Plagiarism.*** Copying significant portions or the whole of someone else’s work, and claiming it as one’s own original work.

***Academic fraud.*** Performing dishonest or deceptive acts to gain a grade that was not earned: for example, buying a paper and submitting it as one’s own; contracting out one’s assignment to a freelance writer or designer; impersonating another student or having someone else take a test on one’s behalf; falsifying academic documents; taking credit for a group project to which one did not contribute; or lying to gain an advantage (e.g., additional time to complete assignments; Mullens, 2000).

***Fabrication.*** Faking lab reports or other data, falsifying references or citations, or citing works one has not read (Mullens, 2000).

***Sabotage.*** The deliberate damaging or concealment of common equipment or reference materials to prevent other students from successfully completing their work (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2002).

***Collusion.*** Unauthorized cooperation on an assignment that was intended to be individual work. Burrus, McGoldrick & Schuhmann, 2007; Christenson Hughes & McCabe, 2006b; Mullens, 2000).

**Effective academic dishonesty policy.** For the purposes of this dissertation, an effective academic integrity policy is one that adequately addresses the 12 categories contained in the checklist derived from Whitley and Keith-Spiegel (2001b, p. 325-342). Please see Appendix C for the complete framework.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

#### **Universities Selected for Study**

Initially, 18 universities were chosen to provide a sample that would accurately reflect academic dishonesty policies across Canada. The selection process followed a four-step process. First, one university per province was randomly chosen from the members of the Group of Thirteen (G-13), the group of the 13 top research universities in Canada (namely, University of British Columbia, University of Calgary, Dalhousie University, University of Laval, McGill University, McMaster University, Université de Montréal, University of Ottawa, Queen's University, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo, and University of Western Ontario; Weingarten, 2006). Second, one additional university was chosen at random from each province that had a G-13 member already in the sample. In other words, one additional university was added from the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec. Third, the University of Prince Edward Island and the Memorial University of Newfoundland were added to the sample, as they are the only universities in their respective provinces. Finally, two universities were randomly selected from each of the other provinces that do not have a G13 member (New Brunswick, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan). During the data collection phase, the University of Toronto's Research Ethics Board rejected my application to survey their faculty and the University of Western Ontario demanded that a principal investigator from



Western oversee my research, with the result that both institutions were excluded from the survey. In order to have Ontario representation, one university (McMaster) was randomly selected from the remaining Ontario members of the G-13, bringing the number of universities included in the survey to 17. The sample, and the manner of selecting it, results in a number of delimitations:

- The choice of only two universities per province limits the researcher's ability to generalize about Canadian universities' undergraduate academic dishonesty policies on a regional basis.
- The choice to use the Group of Thirteen as the starting point for the sample may over-represent large, research-focused universities.
- Only undergraduate academic dishonesty policies were examined. The results of this dissertation may not be generalizable to graduate-level academic dishonesty policies in Canada.

### **Faculty Members Selected for Study**

This dissertation focuses solely on the undergraduate level. A list of faculty who teach undergraduate courses was compiled for each university from each institution's website. Invitations to participate in the survey were emailed to 25 randomly selected faculty members at each of the 18 universities originally in the qualitative sample plus McMaster. Again, the original design did not hold. The response to the original emailing of invitations was minimal—in fact, nearly zero. Thus, after consultation with my supervisor and the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB) at the University of Calgary, I sent invitations to the Heads of Institutional Research (or their equivalents) at

the 17 selected universities. When that approach also yielded minimal results, and after additional consultation, I sent an invitation to the Dean of each faculty, and then chairs of department at each institution, asking that they forward the invitation to their faculty members teaching undergraduates. The survey has several delimitations:

- The sample size and method of selection does not allow comparisons of faculty attitudes by discipline.
- A comparison of student and faculty perceptions and responses to their institution's academic dishonesty policies and procedures is beyond the scope of this work.
- Faculty members whose primary or only teaching responsibility is graduate students were excluded from the faculty survey.
- Teaching assistants (TAs) and part-time faculty were excluded from the faculty survey.

#### **Additional Delimitations**

- Only universities in which English is the primary medium of instruction are included in this study.
- To limit the influence of other potential variables, universities with a significant religious affiliation or mission and military universities were excluded.
- The decision to limit the faculty survey to web-based participation may have inhibited participation by faculty members who are uncomfortable with information technology.

## **Limitations of the Study**

This dissertation evaluates the undergraduate academic dishonesty policies of 17 selected Canadian universities through a qualitative examination. It also seeks to quantitatively analyze the attitudes and beliefs about student academic dishonesty of randomly selected faculty members at each of the 17 universities, while allowing for the addition of qualitative comments for each question. There are a number of possible limitations in this mixed-methods approach.

### **Qualitative Limitations**

- There may be a number of the academic dishonesty policies that do not match the integrity, deterrence, or combination categories of Bertram Gallant; the effective policy framework of Whitley and Keith-Spiegel; or the institutional development categories of Pavela.
- This study was limited to publically available information published on the website of each institution. This raises the possibility that relevant information regarding the academic integrity policy—held privately—was excluded.

### **Quantitative Evaluation**

- The sample size of 412 faculty members may not provide results that are generalizable to all institutions across Canada.
- As participants self-selected for inclusion in the survey, there is a possibility that the results are biased towards faculty members who are more concerned with academic dishonesty than their colleagues.

- The limited response to the survey by faculty members at certain institutions may not allow for the discovery of a relationship between faculty attitudes and institutional policy at the underrepresented institutions.

### **Organization of the Study**

Chapter 1 of this dissertation will introduce the topic of academic dishonesty and describe the rationale behind the research questions. Chapter 2 will review the relevant literature. Chapter 3 will provide the methodology and methods employed in this study. Chapter 4 will provide the data as well as the synthesis and analysis of the same with reference to the study's findings. Chapter 5 will restate the research questions and address them given the study's findings and then conclude with a final discussion of the study's findings and recommendations for further study.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Review of Selected Literature**

Chapter 2 provides a review of current and significant literature and research related to academic integrity and academic dishonesty. The chapter will be divided into the following five sections: (1) an overview of the history of academic dishonesty; (2) aspects of the present-day policy at the 17 universities in this study; (3) the key topics addressed in academic integrity and academic dishonesty literature; and (4) the remedies for academic dishonesty discussed in the literature.

#### **A Brief Overview of the History of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty has been long been an area of concern for educators and educational researchers. Research examining the nature of academic dishonesty and how to control it has been common since the 1920s and 1930s (e.g., Angell, 1928; Drake, 1941; Matthews, 1932; Miller, 1936). Beginning in the early 1990s and continuing until the present, towards the end of the first decade of the 21st century, there has been an explosion in the amount of research and writing about academic integrity and academic dishonesty in both academic journals and the popular press. The research for this paper revealed several hundred recent articles, monographs (ASHE, 2008), special reports (*Ethics and Behavior*, 2001; 2007), conferences and websites devoted to various aspects of academic integrity dealing with students from countries around the world.

#### **Key Topics in the Academic Dishonesty Literature**

The literature review of this work revealed three major areas of focus in the literature: (1) large-scale surveys of self-reported academic dishonesty by students, (2) plagiarism, and (3) contextual factors affecting academic dishonesty (e.g., policy and

procedure; honor codes and faculty attitudes and responses to academic dishonesty).

Plagiarism is perhaps the most contentious issue in the literature surrounding academic integrity and dishonesty. There is a strong emphasis on plagiarism in this literature review because plagiarism is a pre-eminent topic in the literature on academic dishonesty.

**Large-scale studies.** The modern era of research into academic integrity and academic dishonesty was launched in 1964 with the publication of Bower's seminal work, "Student Dishonesty and its Control in College," which was the first large-scale, multi-campus exploration of academic dishonesty in the US (McCabe & Pavela, 2000). Bowers (1964) examined more than 5,000 students at nearly a hundred campuses and found that the self-reported rates of cheating for students were between 50 and 70%. While a replication of Bowers' work (McCabe & Bowers, 1994) showed a minimal increase in academically dishonest behaviors, McCabe and Trevino (1996) noted "although the number of students who cheat has increased only modestly, the students who do cheat are engaging in a wider variety of test cheating behaviors today and are also cheating more often" (p. 31). Large-scale surveys done by McCabe, Trevino, and Butterfield (2001a) found that more than 75% of undergraduate students had engaged in serious cheating at least once during their academic careers. They asserted: "Surveys of cheating among college students suggest that academic dishonesty is both prevalent and growing" (p. 29). Diekhoff et al. (1996) found, in a replication of a 1984 survey, "a significant rise in cheating by US college students between 1984 and 1994" (p. 478). A second replication, in 2004, of the initial 1984 experiment—with the additions of items about the Internet and a newly introduced honor code—indicated a slight drop in the number of students

cheating. The overall percentages of students cheating at least once were as follows: in 1984, 54%; in 1994, 61%; and in 2004, 57% (Vandehey et al., 2007).

In general, despite what Bertram Gallant (2008) has termed the “moral panic” (p. 1) surrounding contemporary views of academic integrity, many scholars remain skeptical about the concept of a rising tide of academic dishonesty. Passow et al. (2006) acknowledge an apparent increase in self-reported academic dishonesty but maintains: “Academic dishonesty (cheating) has been prevalent on college campuses for decades” (p. 643). Park (2003) notes that “Longitudinal and time series data on student cheating are thin on the ground, but the evidence suggests that it is becoming more common,” while Marshall and Garry (2005) observe that: “There is the general, if perhaps not yet well supported, belief that students are now more predisposed to engage in dishonest practices during their studies” (p. 457).

Comparing cheating rates over time raises the issues of comparing behaviors explored by different methodologies, different terms of reference and potentially variable definitions of the behavior being investigated (Bertram Gallant, 2008; Vandehey, et al., 2007; Whitley, Nelson, & Jones, 1999). There are a number of issues in studies of self-reported instances of academic dishonesty. Many such surveys are conducted on a single campus or with a small sample size that limits their generalizability (e.g., McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield, 2001a). According to Bertram Gallant (2008), “survey studies that report the percentage of people who ‘cheat’ misrepresent the empirical evidence. Survey results can only suggest that respondents may be engaging in behaviors that may be considered cheating by their educational institutions” (p. 8).

**Plagiarism.** The major areas of discussion of plagiarism are (1) defining plagiarism, (2) plagiarism as part of the learning process, (3) plagiarism as crime and punishment, (4) plagiarism as intertextuality, and (5) the role of culture in plagiarism.

The relatively recent development of anti-plagiarism conferences is one illustration of the level of concern that plagiarism has generated in the academy. On November 21 and 22, 2003, the first Asia Pacific Educational Integrity conference was held at the University of South Australia in Adelaide. From this gathering came the Asia-Pacific Forum for Educational Integrity (APFEI), which in turn gave rise to the *International Journal of Educational Integrity* and an annual conference. The APFEI aims “to provide an opportunity for researchers and practitioners in the Asia-Pacific region to take a leadership role in the relatively new field of educational integrity” (APFEI, n.d.). In the UK, the First International Plagiarism Conference was held in Newcastle upon Tyne, 28–30 June 2004, and has since become an annual event.

**Defining plagiarism.** The most common definition of plagiarism is copying someone else’s words or ideas and claiming them as one’s own (e.g., Bertram Gallant, 2008; Jones, Reid, & Bartlett, 2005; *OED*, n.d.). Martin (1994) categorized plagiarism into six categories (enumeration mine):

- (1) word-for-word plagiarism. . . occurs when someone copies phrases or passages out of a published work without using quotation marks, without acknowledging the source, or both. (2) When some of the words are changed, but not enough, the result can be called paraphrasing plagiarism . . . (3) subtle plagiarism occurs when a person gives references to original sources, and perhaps quotes them,



but never looks them up, having obtained both from a secondary source—which is not cited (Bensman, 1988: 456-457). This can be called plagiarism of secondary sources . . . (4) the use of structure of the argument in a source without due acknowledgment of the source. [including]cases in which the plagiarizer does look up the primary sources but does not acknowledge a systematic dependence on the citations in the secondary source . . . [is] plagiarism of the form of a source. (5) More general than this is plagiarism of ideas, in which an original thought from another is used but without any dependence on the words or form of the source. (6) Finally, there is the blunt case of putting one’s name to someone else’s work, which might be called plagiarism of authorship. (p. 36)

***Plagiarism as part of the learning process.*** Martin argues that blatant plagiarism by students is often unintentional and thus not as serious as the more subtle forms he catalogues. Much of the literature indicates that students do often plagiarize by mistake (e.g., Larkham & Manns, 2002; Marshal & Garry, 2005; Martin 1994; and Snow, 2006).

Levin (2003, 2006) asserts that the entire plagiarism debate is misguided because having students appropriate knowledge is, and has been, the basis of Western education (p. 7). He further (2006) castigates anti-plagiarists for the “emotive language” of crime and punishment that they use, because in his view students need to be taught how to write in an academic style and because: “the present role of the plagiarism police in promulgating the turnitin (*sic*) culture, in which ideas and writings are treated as commodities, needs to be challenged” (p. 23). Hunt (2002) argues in “Four Reasons to be

Happy about Internet Plagiarism” that this challenge to academic standards could be a good thing if it leads to reform that makes higher education more meaningful to students. He suggests that if students saw value in what they are supposed to be learning—as opposed to valuing only the degree or certificate that validates their learning—then academic integrity would no longer be an issue. McGowan (2005, 2005b) asserts that educators are “putting the cart before the horse,” and doing students a grave disservice, by concentrating on plagiarism prevention rather than on teaching freshmen and women what is expected and required of them in tertiary education. She suggests that institutions adopt an apprenticeship period for all new students, so that they can learn necessary academic skills in a safe environment. She believes that properly integrating students into the culture of academia will eliminate many of the issues of academic integrity, and particularly plagiarism (pp. 287, 290). Leask (2004) reminds us that students new to higher education are struggling to find their place: “All students are to a large degree “cultural others” seeking acceptance into the academic cultural community” (p. 8).

***Plagiarism as crime and punishment.*** Jon Appleton, of Oxford Brookes University (as cited in Baty, 2006, np), states: “all plagiarism, no matter how minor and regardless of intent, should be taken seriously and penalized, to protect hardworking students from determined cheats.” Fialkoff (1993) believes that plagiarism in any form is “inexcusable.” McDonald Ross (2004) considers plagiarism “a crime.” This attitude of crime and punishment is illustrated by the San Jose State University Library team (2003) which entitled its online academic integrity tutorial: “Plagiarism: The Crime of Intellectual Kidnapping.”

***Plagiarism as intertextuality.*** A number of scholars have asserted that the debate about the nature of plagiarism is no longer useful or applicable (e.g., Levin, 2006; Share, 2006; Gu & Brooks, 2008; Wheeler, 2009). Levin (2006) suggests that all teaching materials and passing student papers be put on the Internet where students could freely access them with what he terms a “Creative Commons” license. Student assessment would be based on their ability to select relevant material and synthesize it into a coherent piece of writing. He also advocates a new definition of plagiarism that clearly indicates the intention of the writer involved. He believes that plagiarism is a positive academic activity while the deliberate copying of someone else’s words and claiming them as your own is simply cheating. Share advocates a new way of viewing texts and materials. He believes that

[i]t makes sense to stop talking about plagiarism—a term with very negative connotations and much emotional baggage—and to talk about the challenges of “managing inter-textuality.” This is about understanding the nature of contemporary communication; the ethics of writing and research; the peculiar nature of the academic community; and, ultimately, the purposes of education itself. (2006, np)

***Technology and plagiarism.*** While student test cheating and acting dishonestly using technology is an issue in the literature (e.g., O’Neil, 2003; Stephens, Young, & Calabrese, 2007; Stoney & McMahon, 2004), plagiarism using the Internet or other digital sources is the chief topic in the area of technology and academic dishonesty (e.g., Groark, Oblinger & Choa, 2001; Hansen, 2003; Mello, 2000; Szabo & Underwood, 2004).

Unquestionably, the Internet and word processing programs have made the manipulation of text far easier and quicker than it was previously. Numerous academics (e.g. Park, 2003; Jones et al., 2005; Share, 2006; and Straw, 2002) and journalists (e.g., Baty, 2000, 2006 a, 2006 b; Boynton 2001; Hansen, 2003; Gabriel, 2010) have commented on the rise of the “copy-paste” generation who see nothing wrong with manipulating the contents of Internet websites, or other electronic texts, to their own ends.

Students’ seemingly laissez-faire attitude toward copying is often attributed to the common practice of plagiarism in popular culture. Plagiarism is imbedded our literary and popular culture: novelists use themes first written by others, and popular musicians commonly sample other artists’ work. Music downloading is a popular pastime and software piracy is ubiquitous in education and business (Levin, 2003, 2006; Poole, 2007; Townley & Parsell, 2005). Blum (2009a, 2009b) conducted an anthropological study of students’ attitudes towards technology, information, and plagiarism, and found that contemporary students’ immersion in culture of file sharing, free downloads, or pirated copies of music and movies have given them a fundamentally different view of the ethics of sharing. She argues that students do not understand the need for, or the emphasis on, citation and so ignore the rules as they often do regulations about downloading or drinking on campus.

This situation has led to two dominant views of technology-enabled plagiarism. One, not unlike the “ plagiarism as crime and punishment” view already discussed, sees technology as an enabler of behavior that constitutes an ethical or moral failing that must be policed or corrected (e.g., Carroll & Appleton, 2001; Phillips & Horton, 2000; Stephens et al., 2007; Western Oregon University, nd). The opposing view sees plagiarism as a

matter of teaching and learning arising from a conflict between academic norms and Millennial students' views of what forms of text manipulation are valid and permissible (e.g., Blum, 2009a, 2009b; Clarke & Aiello, 2006; Jackson, 2006; Levin 2003, 2006; Marshall & Garry, 2006; Quinnan, 2007; Share, 2005; Wilson, 2004).

The second view is espoused by Wood (2004), who in her role as chair of her institution's disciplinary committee observed:

I see a disparity between the values of academic integrity espoused by the Institution and its faculty and the student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. This disparity is not because students are more dishonest or lack a moral center, but that their experiences—particularly with Webbased (*sic*) transfer of information—has led them to form different attitudes towards information, authorship, and intellectual property. (p. 237)

Adding to the debate is research showing that a high percentage of students view as wrong “major” plagiarism such as copying and pasting large chunks of text from the Internet or submitting someone else's work (Scanlon & Neumann, 2002; Wheeler, 2009).

Regardless of the causes, most institutions are determined to stop their students from plagiarizing. The process of detecting plagiarism has been impacted by technology as well. In the not-so-distant past, detecting plagiarism and assembling evidence could be a time-consuming business. Larkham & Manns (2002) noted: “the time necessary to untangle plagiarized sources can be significant. This is compounded by . . . the institution's pressure to begin proceedings as soon as cheating is suspected . . . Amassing the requisite amount and standard of evidence in [the sample case study] required the member of staff to spend 16 hours to identify textual correlations in the space of three

days” (p. 347). Today, academics, using tools on the Internet such as Google and anti-plagiarism (text-matching) software such as turnitin.com and mydropbox.com, are now catching more students with much less effort (Chaudhuri, 2008). It has become common for institutions and/or individual professors to require their students to submit work to sites such as turnitin.com for review before grading. Predictably, those espousing a “crime and punishment” model are in favor of this trend while others are not. Levin (2003) asserts that students need to be taught how to write in an academic style and that Turnitin contributes to academic work being treated as a commodity. Townley & Parsell, 2005, believe that services such as Turnitin create a climate of distrust between students and instructors that leads to more academic dishonesty. The issue of trust and faculty roles in maintaining academic integrity and reducing academic dishonesty will be discussed in the section on remedies for academic dishonesty.

***The role of culture in plagiarism.*** Aside from the issue of the academic culture of an institution, there is another cultural issue that is repeatedly discussed in the literature: international students, or students whose first language is not English, are seen to be persistent plagiarists (Liu, 2005; Tysome, 2006). A discussion of the influx of Chinese students to North America in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* characterizes the Chinese students as generally too weak in English language ability to cope with academic work at the university level and therefore prone to plagiarism out of desperation (Bartlett & Fischer, 2011). In Canada, Liu (2005) asserts that the view of non-native speakers of English (NNSE)—as prone to academic dishonesty—is simply wrong. She views plagiarism as a cultural construct that some students simply have not yet mastered. In a study of English as a second or other language, college students Evans and Youmans

(2000) had students negotiate definitions of acceptable work with experienced peers and instructors and found “that such socially situated discourse is necessary for students to grasp generally agreed-upon definitions of, and beliefs and attitudes toward, such complex academic issues” (np). Both of these views are well supported by the literature (e.g., Gu & Brooks, 2008; Ouellette, 2008; Wheeler, 2009).

Concerns with academic integrity and academic dishonesty are now common around the world. Diekhoff, LaBeff, Shinohara, K., and Yasukawa (1999) compared rates of college cheating in Japan and the US. Grimes (2004) examined the attitudes towards cheating of American business students versus those of business students from former Soviet countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, while Lupton and Chapman (2002) compared American and Russian students’ tendencies and attitudes towards academic honesty and dishonesty. Chun-Hua and Ling-Yu (2007) conducted a large-scale inquiry into academic dishonesty in higher education in Taiwan. De Lambert, Ellen, and Taylor (2006) published the first study of academic dishonesty in New Zealand, while Christensen Hughes and McCabe (2006b) have done the same in Canada. All of these studies reported high levels of academic dishonesty among students.

### **Contextual Factors Affecting Academic Dishonesty**

Personality and demographic variables are a significant part of the research in academic dishonesty. However, they will not be discussed separately here as the personality and demographic factors that have been found to have the most significant impact on reducing or increasing incidents of academic dishonesty are generally less susceptible to faculty or institutional influence. For example, higher rates of academic dishonesty are found among younger, single students; those who depend on their parents

for financial support; and those who are members of fraternities, sororities, or sports teams (Vandehey et al., 2007; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001b). Personal factors related to policy, procedure, or faculty attitudes will be explored in the remedies section. For a useful graphical model of how these factors inter-relate, see Szabo and Underwood's model (2004, p. 182) of influences on students' desire to cheat (Appendix E).

### **Remedies for Academic Dishonesty**

The academic culture of an institution can have a profound effect on a student's attitudes towards academic integrity (McCabe & Drinan, 1999; McCabe & Pavela, 2004; McCabe, 2005). McCabe's work on honor codes (e.g. McCabe, 1993; McCabe & Trevino, 1996; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 2001a; 2001b; McCabe & Pavela, 1993) indicates that revamping or implementing a modified honor code—a process in which students are involved in policy development, implementation, and judicial application of honesty policies—can reduce student academic dishonesty. “One of the most important aspects of reducing cheating is to ensure that faculty and students understand the values and expectations of the institution. The institution's policy of academic integrity must reflect these values and be actively promoted by the administration” (Carpenter, Harding, Finelli, & Mayhew, 2005, p.T2D-13). Unfortunately, an honor code (or a modified honor code) “is not a panacea.” It must be integrated into the culture of the institution (McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 1999, p.220). Further, Dirmeyer and Cartwright (2012) assert that honor codes work best where a culture of integrity already exists: “It is far easier to maintain a culture of integrity than to build one” (p. A27).

**Trust.** A number of studies have found that a trusting relationship between students and their instructor can lead to increased learning and a corresponding decrease in



students' desire to cheat (Genereux & McLeod, 1995; Jordan, 2001; Stearns, 2001).

Although research has shown a positive relationship between instructors' adherence to academic dishonesty policies (e.g., McCabe, 1993; McCabe & Pavela, 1994; Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2001b, 2002) and student honesty, many faculty members are reluctant to discuss the issue or deal with violations. Faculty members generally prefer to deal with instances of academic dishonesty on their own, without administrative intervention, due to time constraints and fears of lack of institutional support (e.g., Jendrek, 1989; Keith-Spiegel, Tabachnick, Whitley, & Washburn, 1998; McCabe, 1993; 2005).

**Quality of Instruction.** Quality of instruction also plays a part in students' decisions to cheat. Disengaged students or those who realize that their professors continually recycle assignments and other assessments may develop a poor view of academic integrity (Coalter, Lim, & Wanorie, 2007). Perez-Pena (2012) reports that the course involved in the recent Harvard cheating scandal "had a reputation for easy grading and required little effort" (np). It was apparently the professor's sudden changes to make the course more challenging that precipitated the cheating. Buranen (1999) recounts a case in which instructional practice played a key role in provoking student cheating:

When the division chair at the community college told me, "they cheat," she was absolutely right: they did. And as I learned more about their writing program, I did not blame the students for cheating. Frequently, it was the only hope they had for passing the courses. . . . Too much attention was centered on grammatical and formal "correctness" very narrowly and rigidly defined (topic sentences at the beginning of every paragraph, strict five-paragraph essays etc.) and reinforced by

“skill and drill” exercises in the computer lab, and too little attention, frequently none, was devoted to what the profession has been affirming for more than thirty years as the real work of a writing class: the generation of ideas, the recognition of audience and purpose, the communication of meaning—in short the development of competent and confident writers. (p. 73-74)

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Methodology**

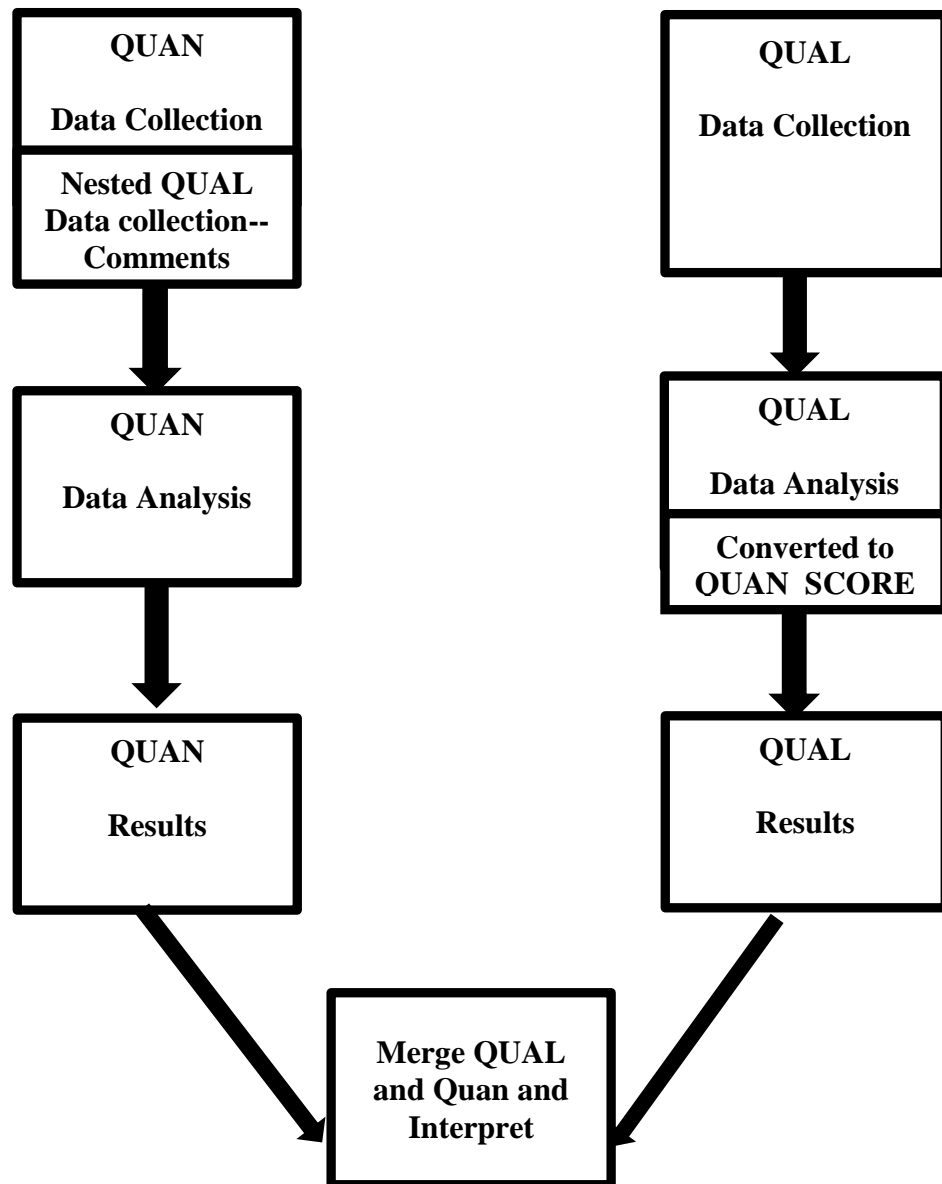
#### **Research Design and Rationale**

This study has two purposes. One is to qualitatively investigate the nature of academic dishonesty policies at selected Canadian universities in order to classify them according to the taxonomy of Bertram Gallant (2008) and evaluate them against the framework of Whitley and Keith-Spiegel (2001b) by converting the qualitative data into a quantitative representation (i.e., a numerical score). Such a conversion will facilitate assigning them a percentage score and placing them in one of Pavela's (2012) four categories of institutional development for academic dishonesty policies: (1) Honor code, a fully developed and coherent set of policies and procedures in which students play an important role; (2) Mature, a well-developed and coherent set of policies and procedures, that are widely followed, but lack meaningful student involvement; (3) Radar screen, a set of policies and procedures are in place but are not fully developed or followed; and (4) Primitive, minimal policies and procedures exist. The second purpose is to quantitatively examine faculty beliefs and actions regarding academic dishonesty at their institution and compare it with their opinions of, and adherence to, their institutions' academic dishonesty policy. There is a qualitative aspect here as well. Respondents are given the opportunity to provide comments after each question. Therefore, the research design will follow a slightly modified concurrent triangulation design. The qualitative comments on the survey will be nested within the quantitative survey questions. This method "can result in well validated and substantiated findings," although two different data sources can be difficult to analyze and reconcile" (Creswell, Plano-Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2008, pp. 181,

188). I considered examining just one aspect of this question: the nature of the institutional policy or faculty attitudes towards academic dishonesty, and their institution's policies on the issue. However, I believe that the policy review on its own would not offer enough depth of information to formulate useful conclusions. Similarly, faculty opinions of academic dishonesty, and of their institution's policy thereof, would be de-contextualized without an examination of the institutional policies in question. Despite the difficulties inherent in this approach, the qualitative review of the artifacts and documents of the policy will inform and enhance the quantitative analysis of faculty opinions and actions around the institutional strategy of academic dishonesty, which are also enhanced by a qualitative element. The research design is illustrated in Diagram 1.

**Figure 1. Research Design Overview** (Adapted from Plano Clark & Creswell, 2008, p.

380)



## **Data Collection Part 1: Qualitative Policy Review**

The data collection for the qualitative aspect of this study involves the review of (1) documents, websites, and artifacts (e.g., tutorial videos that support many of the selected institutions' academic dishonesty policies) and (2), where publically available, the archives (e.g., university publications) of proceedings against students for breaches of academic integrity policy (i.e., acts of academic dishonesty). This study relies on the electronic version of policies and other data available on each individual institution's website. This kind of documentary- or artifact-based research is acknowledged in the literature (e.g., Bailey, 2001; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). Eysenbach and Wyatt identify "passive analysis...[e.g.] studying information on Web sites . . . as one of three approaches for qualitative research on the Internet" (in press, p. 212).

### **Aspects of the Present-Day Policy at the Institutions Under Study**

#### **Preliminary Review**

The table in Appendix F is a summary of the preliminary examination of key areas of the academic dishonesty policies at the universities under study in this work, which was a precursor to the full policy review. There are interesting differences in the policies between the preliminary examination (early 2010) and the full policy evaluation checklist (2012-2013) are interesting. In the initial review, half of the universities have an online tutorial to promote academic honesty and 11 of 18 emphasize the importance of academic integrity; however, only eight of 18 offer a clear definition of it. Seventeen of 18 universities clearly define academic dishonesty, clearly state student obligations to do honest work, and clearly outline disciplinary procedures in cases of academic dishonesty. In terms of orientation, four of 18 are primarily focused on promoting academic integrity;

eight of 18 are focused on the prevention of academic dishonesty—the crime and punishment model—and four of 18 have a combined focus on academic integrity and prevention of dishonesty through crime and punishment.

### **Policy Review Checklist**

The complete results of the policy review checklist are available in Appendix G. They show some significant changes from the preliminary results while taking into account that the University of Toronto and the University of Western Ontario were dropped—and McMaster University added—for the full review.

In the full policy review checklist, all of the universities have some sort of online tutorial to promote academic honesty, although the quality and comprehensiveness of these offerings vary greatly. All emphasize the importance of academic integrity; however, only eight of 17 offer a clear definition of it. All of the institutions clearly define academic dishonesty, clearly state student obligations to do honest work, and clearly outline disciplinary procedures in cases of dishonesty. In terms of orientation, one of 17 is primarily focused on promoting academic integrity; four of 17 are focused on prevention of academic dishonesty—the crime and punishment model—and twelve of 17 are focused on a combination of academic integrity and prevention of dishonesty through crime and punishment. While some of these changes are due to changes in administrative approach—for example, online tutorials and the change in institutions involved (both University of Toronto and University of Western Ontario were found to have an integrity focus in the preliminary evaluation)—these results suggest that Canadian universities are moving away from the crime and punishment–deterrence model towards a combination of integrity and deterrence.

## **Data Collection Part 2: Quantitative Faculty Survey**

The original plan for data collection for the second part of this project involved emailing an invitation to complete a web-based survey to potential participants, randomly selected from the faculty list at the 18 selected universities. Each potential participant was emailed a personalized invitation to participate which contained a link to the secure website. The website was set so as not to record participants' email or IP addresses. By using a secure website and disconnecting the website from an email address, the security of the survey and the anonymity of the participants was preserved (Eysenbach, 2005). This protection of privacy is crucial as these two factors (security and anonymity) have the greatest potential to inhibit participant response and instrument validity, if they are not ensured (Eysenbach & Wyatt, in press; Sue & Ritter, 2007). The possibility of random error in a population decreases with sample size and that sample size is a crucial element in determining the validity of qualitative research results (Gorard, 2001, p. 18). However, Gorard (2001) indicates that "after 80 or so cases each addition to the sample size makes relatively little difference to the accuracy of your sample" (p. 17). Response rates to web-based surveys can vary significantly. Sax, Gilmartin, and Bryant (2003) reported that web-based surveys generally had lower response rates than paper-based surveys, as did Sue and Ritter (2007) who found that the limited research data on web-based surveys indicated response rates of about 30%. To ensure a rate of response yielding useful data, the survey was distributed to 450 individual faculty members (25 faculty members at each institution. Assuming a 30 % response rate, that would yield 150 participants. The personalized invitation and guarantee of anonymity are factors that tend to increase response rates. Offering to share results with participants has also been shown to enhance response rate.



Potential participants were informed of the option to request a copy of the results by email when they were invited to participate. Results will be sent, at the conclusion of this project, to those who request the data by email. To preserve anonymity email and IP addresses are not recorded by the survey software. Therefore, a request for the data could not be connected to any individual survey response. (Eysenbach, 2005, p. 137-138).

### **Population and Sample**

The population of my study is universities in Canada belonging to the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC, nd) and the full-time faculty who teach undergraduates within them. Due to the different nature of the two populations, different techniques were used to select the samples.

For the institutional participants (Qualitative Policy Review), all the members of the AUCC, as indicated by their membership list, were placed in a sampling frame. Colleges and university colleges were then eliminated (see Appendix D for the resultant sampling frame). My sample was neither probability- nor purposive-based. Rather it was a purposive-mixed-quantitative sample (Teddie & Yu, 2008). Eighteen universities were chosen to yield a high sample to population ratio in order to realize the goal of generating a sample giving an accurate view of academic integrity and academic dishonesty policies across Canada. For the same reason, one university per province was deliberately chosen, using the G-13, the group of the thirteen top research universities in Canada, as a starting point. From that starting point, the University of Prince Edward Island and the Memorial University of Newfoundland were added because they are the only universities in their respective provinces. Then one university was chosen at random from each province that had a G-13 member already on the list. Finally, two universities were randomly selected

from each of the provinces that do not have a G-13 member. The complete sample is detailed below:

Alberta: University of Alberta (U of A); University of Calgary (U of C)

British Columbia: University of British Columbia (UBC); University of Victoria (UVic)

Manitoba: University of Manitoba (UMan); University of Winnipeg (UWinn)

New Brunswick: University of New Brunswick (UNB); Mount Allison University (MTA)

Newfoundland: Memorial University of Newfoundland (Memorial)

Nova Scotia: Dalhousie University; Acadia University

Ontario: University of Toronto\*; University of Western Ontario\*; McMaster

Prince Edward Island: University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI)

Quebec: McGill University; Concordia University

Saskatchewan: University of Saskatchewan (USask); University of Regina (U of R)

\* did not participate.

A replacement strategy, as advocated by Gorard (2001, p. 30), was used because two initially selected institutions were excluded from the study. Additional participants were selected at random from remaining candidates from their province in the sampling frame.

Based on the sample above, my population for the Quantitative Survey is all faculty members primarily teaching undergraduates at the selected universities. A list of faculty who teach undergraduate courses was compiled for each university from their official websites. This was the sampling frame for this portion of the research. Invitations to participate in the survey were emailed to 25 randomly selected faculty members at each of the 18 universities in the qualitative sample.

### **Required Changes to the Original Plan**

Unfortunately, the initial emailing of 25 potential participants at each institution yielded minimal—almost zero—response. After consultation with my supervisor and submission of an amendment to my ethics application, invitations were sent to the Deans, and in some cases department chairs, within each faculty at the 18 selected institutions asking that they distribute the invitations to faculty members. Again, the response was not sufficient for all institutions. Finally, invitations were sent to additional randomly selected faculty members at institutions with low response rates. During this process, the University of Toronto denied my request to survey their faculty, citing a risk of “survey fatigue” within their faculty members. In addition, the University of Western Ontario (UWO) would not allow my research to proceed without my having a UWO faculty member act as principal investigator for my research at their university. After consultation with my supervisor and the CFREB at University of Calgary, I decided to exclude UWO from the study. Because this left the study without representation for Ontario, an additional university, McMaster, was randomly selected from the sampling frame of Ontario universities.

### **Instrumentation**

The instruments for qualitative portion of the study are (1) a matrix for determining how each institution’s academic dishonesty policy fits in Bertram Gallant’s (2008) categories of academic dishonesty policy (i.e., deterrence, or integrity; see Appendix B); (2) a checklist adapted from Whitley & Keith-Spiegel’s (2001b) framework for an effective academic integrity policy (see Appendix C). Finally, the qualitative evaluation was converted to a numerical score so that each policy could be given a

percentage ranking to facilitate comparisons and to place each policy in one of Pavela's (2012) categories of institutional policy. Using these types of frameworks to qualitatively examine institutions using documentary evidence and artifacts is well supported by the literature (Eysenbach, 2005; Patton, 2002; Taylor-Powell & Renner 2003). These particular instruments were chosen because they are based on a wide variety of literature that explores academic integrity and academic dishonesty, and thereby informs institutional responses to student academic dishonesty (e.g., Gehring & Pavela, 1994; Jendrek, 1989; Levin, 2003, 2005; Pavela & McCabe, 1993; McCabe, 1993; McCabe, 2005; McCabe & Bowers, 1994; McCabe & Trevino, 1996, 1997; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 1999, 2001; Park, 2003; 1993; Pavela, 1997; Whitley, 1998).

The instrument for Part 2 of the study is an online survey of approximately 30 multiple-choice and short-answer questions (depending on respondent's choices) with space for commentary. Guidelines for construction of conventional survey questions (e.g., Bailey, 1997; Fink, 2009; Fowler, 2002; Gorard, 2001) were followed, as were guidelines for the construction of online surveys and question types (e.g. Eysebach, 2005; Eysenbach & Wyatt, in press; Fink, 2009; Lumsden, Flinn, Anderson, & Morgan, 2005; Sue & Ritter, 2007). The question content was adapted in part from a recent survey of faculty attitudes and responses to academic dishonesty (Coalter et al., 2007).

All instruments were vetted by experts and piloted with a sample population similar to that under study before being used for this research project (see Appendix A for the complete documents).

## **Data Analysis Part 1: Qualitative Examination of Policy Documents**

The academic dishonesty policies of the selected universities were evaluated and placed in one of three categories (rule compliance, integrity, or a combination thereof) elucidated by Bertram Gallant (2008). This placement was accomplished by matching “the themes or patterns, ideas concepts behaviors interactions incidents, terms or phrases used” in the policy with the dominant characteristics of each of the three respective categories (Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003, p. 2). In addition, the data was examined for “repetition” and “similarities and differences” around the key concepts of each category (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, pp. 67-69).

**Rule compliance (deterrence) strategy.** Academic dishonesty policies in this category are primarily concerned with emphasizing the seriousness of academic dishonesty and the harsh punishments that accompany it. Rule compliance strategies are focused on due process, disciplinary bodies, violations, and sanctions. The dialogue is one of crime and punishment. Academic dishonesty is “treated primarily as a disciplinary issue and less as an issue of development or pedagogy.” (Bertram Gallant, 2008, p. 36). As a result, administrators handle policy and process with minimal input from students or faculty members. The essential function of policy in the rule compliance orientation is to force students to conform to institutional rules and regulations (Bertram Gallant, 2008). Policies were placed in this category if the wording of the policy and supporting documents or media focused primarily on consequences and punishment for academic offenses.

**Integrity strategy.** Policies grouped in the integrity strategy category are primarily concerned with emphasizing the role of the university to teach moral, ethical

behavior. The primary approach is to prevent academic dishonesty by teaching the value of honesty and integrity. It is assumed that academic dishonesty results from a lack of moral or ethical reasoning. Integrity policies often contain honor codes or modified honor codes. Although policies contain disciplinary guidelines, they are not the main focus and the goal of sanctions is to reform offending students through “discipline and remediation” rather than expulsion (Bertram Gallant, 2008, pp. 38-40). When discussing the integrity strategy, researchers should note that honor codes or modified honor codes are rarely used in Canadian universities (Bertram Gallant & Drinan, 2008). Policies were grouped in this category if the wording of the policy and procedures and supporting media focused on academic honesty as a core value of education and the policy emphasised teaching and learning as part of the remediation process for academic dishonesty.

**Combination strategy.** Policies are grouped within the integrity strategy category if they meet the following criteria: they place approximately equal emphasis on integrity, teaching students about how to be students and why it is important to be honest, and rule compliance (i.e., deterrence).

The checklist developed from Whitley & Keith Spiegel’s (2001b) framework for an effective policy is used to qualitatively evaluate the elements present in, and related to, each institution’s response to academic dishonesty. The checklist is divided into twelve categories namely: 1. Policy development; 2. Statement of policy; 3. Definition/explication of prohibited behavior; 4. Specification of responsibilities (for students, faculty members and administrators); 5. Specification of resolution procedures; 6. Specification of penalties; 7. Remediation; 8. Record keeping; 9. Specification of prevention measures; 10. Implementation of the academic integrity policy; 11. Faculty

training and 12. Student assistance/orientation. There are several items under each category. For example, Category 1, “policy development” is intended to determine which of administrators, faculty members and/or students were involved in the development and/or revision of each respective institution’s academic honesty policy. The researcher performed a form of content analysis based on the key words and phrases from the checklist to evaluate the academic dishonesty policies and associated resources (e.g., online tutorials; academic honesty resources prepared for student use) to determine if the policy, and assorted supports, contained the elements mandated in the checklist (Grbich, 2007; Thomas, 2003). The presence or absence of the qualitative elements in each category were scored on a binary, or present absent/no data, basis (Abeyasekera, 2005; Guttman, 1944). If an element was not applicable to an individual institution the “not applicable” elements were not calculated in the score. To continue the example from Category 1, an institution would be given a score of three out of a possible three points if the analysis of the academic dishonesty policy and institutional website documents indicated consultation with all three groups. In this case, the institution’s policy development policy and procedures (if available) would also be consulted, if necessary, to determine what level of stakeholder participation is mandated in these documents. Conversely, if no evidence was available for the inclusion of students, for example, in the development or revision of policy but it was evident from the documents that faculty members and administrators participated, then the policy would be given a score of two of three points. In an effort to prevent error or inconsistency in the analysis, a form of the constant comparison approach and checking the data was used (Flick, 2007, pp. 96-98). For each item, under each category, the respective institutions’ score was checked and

rechecked during the initial evaluation and all scores were subsequently reviewed a third (and in some cases, a fourth) time. Also, detailed notes were taken regarding the location and the content of the institutional policy or resource that supported the scoring decision in order to achieve the highest possible level of consistency and reliability in scoring. As all data review and scoring was done by the researcher there are no issues around inter-rater reliability (Flick, 2007; Grbich, 2007). When the checklist evaluation was complete, the total score was converted to a percentage score (quantitative) to facilitate comparison of the policies.

The initial plan was to situate each institution's academic dishonesty policy in a category typical of a traditional academic evaluation, i.e., from excellent (A, 90-100%); good (B, 80-89%) fair (C, 70-79%) and poor (D, 60-69%) (Durm, 1993). However, the decision was taken to place each institution's academic dishonesty policy in the categories of Primitive, Radar Screen, Mature, or Honor Code as defined by Pavela (2012) as these categories offer a richer and more detailed description of the level of development of the respective institutional academic dishonesty policies. After the policies were assigned to a category based on the checklist score, the category placement was cross-checked against the essential elements that define each category. This was done to further ensure that the policies were categorized accurately and consistently and that a policy assigned to a particular category by the checklist score matched the essential elements that define the category. This was an important aspect of the categorization process, particularly for policies that scored near the borderline between two categories. The results of the two classifications, Pavela (based on Whitley and Keith-Spiegel) and Bertram Gallant, were



combined to give a fuller view of each examined policy and then compared with the results of the faculty survey.

### **Data Analysis Part 2: Quantitative Survey**

Results of the survey were tabulated to examine the common or predominant attitudes to academic dishonesty within respondents from each institution surveyed. Qualitative comments were divided into “thought units” (individual ideas) and then assigned to the categories that arose from the data. This method was adapted from McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield, 1999 (who based their approach on the work of Butterfield, Trevino & Ball, 1996; Glasser & Straus, 1967; Goia & Sims, 1986; and Miles & Huberman, 1984). In establishing the categories the concepts of “repetition” and similarities and differences” were also used (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). Constant comparison and multiple evaluations of the categories and of the inclusion of individual items with a given category were also done to ensure the highest possible level of accuracy and consistency (Gibbs, 2007, pp. 93-96). Survey data was then compared to the institutional policy analysis for possible links between policy and faculty attitudes. Finally, trends in the survey data across the entire survey (including quotations selected following the guidelines of Gibbs, 2007, pp. 97-98) and the dominant trends from the qualitative examination were examined in an attempt to generalize results for the Canadian context.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Results**

#### **Presentation of the Results of the Policy Evaluation Checklist and the Faculty Survey**

The results of the policy evaluation are discussed first. The results of the policy evaluation checklist are delineated and the results compared with the author's evaluation of each institution's policy orientation and the results of the survey. Then, the results of the faculty survey are examined. The details of the participants are briefly touched on, followed by the responses to the survey questions. The presentation of the quantitative results precedes those of the qualitative comments.

#### **Policy Review Checklist and Policy Orientation**

**Results of the Policy Review.** This study included a qualitative evaluation of the academic dishonesty policies. The qualitative evaluation was converted to a quantitative score in order to give each policy a percentage ranking, to facilitate comparisons, and to place each policy in one of Pavela's (2012) categories of institutional policy (see Table 1 for complete details).

**Policy orientation.** Of the 17 universities reviewed, 13 were found to have a combination academic dishonesty orientation, while three of the other four (Concordia, UBC and UPEI) have policies and procedures that are primarily oriented towards deterrence or punishing offenders. In contrast, Dalhousie's policies and procedures are oriented towards integrity or teaching students to act ethically in their studies.

**Policy categorization.** The 17 universities involved in the study were evaluated qualitatively. Then in order to grade the policies, the qualitative evaluation was converted

to a numerical score as follows: 60-69% = D = Primitive, 70-79% = C = Radar Screen; 80-89% = B = Mature; 90-100% = A = Honor Code\* as defined by Pavela (2012). I chose not to alter Pavela's original nomenclature. Therefore, it is possible for an institution to be classified at the Honor Code level in this document although none of the institutions in this study use an honor code or modified honor code system. None of the universities studied have policies and procedures that were evaluated as belonging in the Primitive category. The University of Calgary, University of Prince Edward Island, University of Regina, and University of Winnipeg have policies and procedures that fall in the Radar Screen category. Dalhousie University and the University of Saskatchewan have policies and procedures that fall in the Honor Code category due to their emphasis on student involvement in promoting academic integrity and on teaching students to act with integrity that go beyond the level of the Mature Policy category. The remaining 11 universities' policies and procedures fall in the Mature Policy category. The percentage scores ranged from a low of 70 to a high of 96.

**Table 1**  
**Summary of Policy Review**

Univ.	Score	%	Grade	Category	Policy Orientation	Match Survey?	Comments
Acadia	39/45	87	B	Mature	Combination	Y	The rhetoric of the policy is fully about integrity while the actions mandated by the policy are largely deterrence with some attention to integrity.

Concordia	38/43	8 8	B	Mature	Deterrence	N	The strong emphasis on deterrence in Concordia's Academic Code of Conduct is somewhat ironic given that Concordia is a member of the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI), which advocates a teaching and learning approach to academic integrity. In addition, Concordia's academic plan for 2012 to 2016 includes a number of student success initiatives that will create "new mechanisms for students to master essential academic skills, such as written and oral communications skills, and practise intellectual integrity and research ethics" (Academic Plan, Objective 3 Student Success, Concordia University, 2012).
Dalhousie	43\45	9 6	A	*Honor Code	Integrity	N	A very well crafted and supported institutional response that would be enhanced by a first-year experience course. *Does not have an honor code system.
McGill	34/41	8 3	B	Mature	Combination	Y	A well organized and presented institutional response. Although McGill is a member of ICAI and the policy contains rhetoric regarding the necessity of academic integrity and provides for training of students to act ethically, the penalties for academic dishonesty do not include any provision for remedial work.
McMaster	41/46	8 9	B	Mature	Combination	Y	McMaster's policy would seem to be integrity-oriented but sanctions that emphasize punishment rather than learning move it to a combination.
Memorial	35\43	8 1	B	Mature	Combination	Y	Policy at MUN also indicates an integrity approach to academic dishonesty as instructors are encouraged to attempt informal resolution first. However, while MUN does offer a first-year university experience to engage students in the academic culture and requirements of the university, there is no provision for remedial training for offenders. Also, education for students to avoid academic dishonesty are present, but weak in orientation and online tutorials.
MTA	37\45	8 2	B	Mature	Combination	Y	Several MTA documents speak of a culture of academic integrity at MTA and indicate that quality of teaching and learning and academic integrity are core values of the University. However, a

							coherent statement of this intent is not found in the calendar and the role of faculty in helping students to avoid academic dishonesty is omitted from the calendar while the penalties and procedures regarding academic offenses are discussed in detail. Overall, it is a solid policy, but it lacks facility for remediation and the online resources are very limited.
U of A	34/42	81	B	Mature	Combination	Y	University of Alberta clearly is working towards an integrity orientation regarding student academic dishonesty; however, the lack of remedial responses to academic dishonesty places it in the combination category.
UBC	32/40	80	B	Mature	Deterrence	N	Provides a great deal of resources, and rhetoric around academic integrity, but policy focuses on punishment of offenders. While non-academic offenses are often accompanied by counseling and remediation, this option is not used with academic misconduct.
U of C	31/41	76	C	Radar Screen	Combination	Y	Unlike most of the institutions in this study, the U of C's academic integrity websites were difficult to navigate and have only rudimentary content. This is an oversight in an era when many institutions are moving more and more to online provision of information to students.
U Man	34/42	81	B	Mature	Combination	Y	Their policy is one of the most comprehensive in this study and clearly intended to be integrity-focused, but they unfortunately fail to include remediation courses among the responses mandated for academic misconduct. They also fail to differentiate between deliberate plagiarism and inadvertent plagiarism (errors of format or citation).
UNB	37/45	82	B	Mature	Combination	Y	There are many elements of the deterrence model, but because UNB is one of the few institutions that differentiate between the nature of accidental and deliberate plagiarism, it falls within the combination orientation. Overall, it is a solid policy, though it lacks reference to faculty roles and responsibilities and the online resources are very limited.
UPEI	27/41	70	C	Radar Screen	Deterrence	Y	UPEI has a basic framework of policy in place with minimal extras. The only reference to teaching students about

							academic integrity occurs in an anti-plagiarism tutorial borrowed (with acknowledgement) and adapted from San Jose State University (UPEI, Plagiarism, 2006).
U of R	30/42	7 1	C	Radar Screen	Combination	Y	Overall, University of Regina has a somewhat scattered approach to academic integrity as content was contained on a variety of websites and online anti-plagiarism resources varied by faculty while library resources had only rudimentary content. This is an oversight in an era when many institutions are moving more and more to online provision of information to students.
USask	40/44	9 1	A	*Honor Code	Combination	Y	While it is obvious that a great deal of time, planning and effort goes into promoting academic integrity at the U of S, the sanctions in the policy and the lack of remedial teaching does not match the overall “progressive justice” intent of the policy and the Learning Charter. *Does not have an honor code system.
U Vic	32/40	8 0	B	Mature	Deterrence	N	UVic has one of the few policies noted in this study that includes a clear differentiation between minor and major cheating and also takes into account whether or not the incident is a first or subsequent offense.
U Winn	26/40	7 0	C	Radar Screen	Combination	Y	The AD policy states that it is not intended to be punitive, but rather a mechanism for upholding the standards of AI needed to achieve the mission of the university (UWinn, 2013). Thus, UWinn seems to be oriented to integrity. However, the actual institutional response focuses on deterrence, which makes this a combination orientation.

Table 1 Summary of Policy Review

## Results of the Faculty Survey

The survey is divided into five sections: (1) Affiliation and Teaching Responsibilities, Questions 1-5; (2) Institutional Academic Integrity Policy, Questions 6-11; (3) My Attitude Towards Student Academic Dishonesty, Questions 12-27; (4) My

Colleagues' Attitudes Towards Student Academic Dishonesty, Questions 28-29; and (5) Three Changes, Question 30. Participants also had the opportunity to make final comments.

As noted in the methodology section, two of the originally selected institutions—namely, the University of Toronto (which denied my ethics application, citing “potential survey fatigue”) and the University of Western Ontario (which required a UWO faculty member to supervise my research)—were removed from the study and an Ontario substitute (McMaster), randomly selected in their stead. In addition, once the institutional participants were finalized, a number of attempts were required to stimulate faculty members to respond to my survey. Although I cannot be sure why the numbers responding to the initial request were so low, the proliferation of email requests for information or participation and spam probably contributed to this low response. Emails to the deans and chairs of department (when a dean referred me to a chair) requesting that they forward my survey participation request generated a significant response in most cases. For institutions with low response rates (e.g., UBC, UVic), invitations were sent to additional randomly selected faculty members. Please note that due to rounding, the percentages in the tables may not total 100%.

### **Affiliation and Teaching Responsibilities**

**Participating institutions with number of respondents.** Since the invitation to participate was sent to deans of faculty at 17 universities and they were asked to distribute the invitation to all faculty members teaching undergraduates, it is not possible to state exactly how many faculty members were invited to respond. However, given that 691 persons attempted the survey, it is reasonable to assume, given the average response rate

in the literature of 30%, that approximately 2,200 faculty members received the invitation. Of these, 412 responses were classified as complete (this does not mean that every question was answered; rather it indicates that the respondents included their institutional affiliation and reached the end of the survey, answering at least 90% of the questions). A further 155 responses were classified as partial (respondents started the survey but either did not include institutional data or completed less than 90% of the survey items). A further 124 responses were disqualified because the respondents indicated either that undergraduates were not their primary teaching responsibility or that they were graduate teaching assistants. Of the 5 respondents who indicated “other” as their academic rank, none were excluded because their teaching experience response was at least five to nine years, indicating that they were relatively experienced instructors. Table 1 indicates the total number of respondents by institution and the percentage of the total for each institution, as well as the totals and percentages by province. Initially, the project had hoped to garner 150 responses, so 412 responses may imply that the results have greater generalizability. Unfortunately, the low number of responses from the University of British Columbia (9), the University of Victoria (5), and Dalhousie University (10) makes a valid exploration of a relationship between institutional academic dishonesty policy and faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty unlikely for these institutions.



**Table 2**  
**Survey Respondents by Institution and Province**

Province	Univ.	# of responses	%	Univ.	# of responses	%	Total Resp/ %
Alberta	U of A	58	14.1	U of C	14	3.4	72/ 17.5
British Columbia	UBC	9	2.2	UVic	5	1.2	14/ 3.5
Manitoba	UMan	17	4.1	UWinn	20	4.9	37/ 9.0
New Brunswick	MTA	29	7.0	UNB	27	6.6	56/ 13.6
Newfoundland & Labrador	Memorial	17	4.1	Nil	Nil	Nil	17/ 4.1
Nova Scotia	Acadia	21	5.1	Dalhousie	10	2.4	31/ 7.5
Ontario	McMaster	58	14.1	Nil	Nil	Nil	58/14.1
Prince Edward Island	UPEI	15	3.6	Nil	Nil	Nil	15/3.6
Quebec	Concordia	28	6.8	McGill	34	8.3	62/ 15.1
Saskatchewan	U of R	26	6.3	USask.	24	5.8	50/12.1

Table 2

**Teaching assignments of participants.** As noted, only faculty members whose primary teaching responsibility is undergraduates were included in the survey. Of these, 154 respondents (37.4%) teach only undergraduate students; the remaining 258 (62.6%) teach predominantly undergraduate students.

**Teaching area of specialization.** To analyze participants' teaching areas as a factor influencing attitudes towards academic dishonesty is beyond the scope of this study. The data in Table 2 were collected so that any bias towards a particular discipline, or disciplines, would be evident. As is evident from the table, the majority of respondents are from Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences.

**Table 3**  
**Subject Area Taught by Respondents**

Subject Area	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Arts	81	19.7%
Business	27	6.6%
Communication/Journalism	4	1.0%
Education	7	1.7%
Engineering	37	9.0%
Interdisciplinary	13	3.2%
Medicine/ Health	40	9.7%
Mathematics	12	2.9%
Sciences	79	19.3%
Social sciences	78	19.0%
Other	32	7.8%
No response	2	0.5%

Table 3

**Years of teaching experience.** This study does not attempt to explore correlations, if any, between years of teaching experience and attitudes towards academic dishonesty. The years of experience were examined to determine if the majority of responses were from any one group. Of the respondents 65 (15.8%) indicated less than five years of teaching experience; 69 (16.8%) indicated five to nine years of experience; 96 (23.3%) indicated 10 to 14 years of experience; 59 (14.3%) indicated 15 to 19 years of teaching experience; 120 (29.1%) indicated 20 or more years of experience; and 3 did not respond. It is clear that the majority of respondents are highly experienced in teaching undergraduates.

**Academic rank.** The academic rank of the respondents was examined only to ensure that graduate teaching assistants were excluded and only the target faculty members and instructors were included. The respondents are professor emeritus, 4 (1%); full professor, 109 (26.5%); associate professor, 127 (30.8%); assistant professor, 84

(20.4%); lecturer/instructor, 81(19.7%); other, 5 (1.2%); no response, 2 (0.5%). The five “other” and two “no response” answers were not excluded because these respondents’ teaching experience (five to nine years or above) suggests that they are experienced instructors.

### **Institutional Academic Integrity Policy: Questions 6-11**

**Question 6. I learned about my institution’s academic dishonesty policy through...** Respondents had the option of choosing all that applied from a list including departmental orientation, academic catalogue, website, discussion with colleagues, and other (with an invitation to specify in the comment box). The 410 respondents selected a total of 865 options, indicating that a majority of respondents chose two or more options (therefore, the percentages do not add to 100%). Of these respondents, 251(61.2%) indicated that they had learned about the policy through discussion with colleagues. The remaining percentages are: institutional orientation, 146 (35.6%); website, 142 (34.6%); academic catalogue 139 (33.9%) and departmental orientation 94, (22.9%). Those who chose “other” constituted 93 (22.9%). Of the respondents who selected the “other” category, 28 of 93 (22.3%) reported that they had learned about their institution’s policy only after encountering academic dishonesty with their students. Comments also indicated that many faculty members were unaware of their institution’s academic dishonesty policy until they received a departmental email or were required to include information about their institutional policy in course syllabi. Overall, the results indicate a tendency of faculty members to explore academic dishonesty policies only when compelled to do so.

**Question 7. I \_\_\_\_\_ my institution’s academic dishonesty policies and procedures.** Despite the results above, nearly 90% of respondents considered themselves

to be knowledgeable or at least familiar with their institutional policy. Still, 9.8% indicated that they had minimal knowledge of the policy at their institution. The comments for this question indicated that nine out of 48 respondents (22.5 %) believe that there is a disconnect between policy and practice. “I know what is SUPPOSED (*sic*) to happen, however, that is often not consistent with what does” (Comment, Q.7.1) typifies this kind of response. In addition, eight out of 48 comments (16.7%) indicated that faculty members felt it necessary to check, or reacquaint themselves with, their institutional policy whenever an incidence of academic dishonesty arose.

**Question 8. The following stakeholders were involved in drafting or revising my institutions’ academic dishonesty policy.** This question was included in order to get an idea of faculty members’ knowledge of the genesis of their institutions’ academic dishonesty policy and to confirm the stakeholders’ information in the policy review checklist. Of 411 respondents, 258 (62.8%) did not know which stakeholders were involved in developing the policy. The majority of comments for this question speculated about who was involved with the policy creation or revision.

**Question 9. My institution demonstrates an ethos of concern that all its members act ethically.** Of 411 respondents, 326 (79%) agreed or strongly agreed, while 36 (8.8%) were not sure. In contrast, 49 (12%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. It would seem then that a sizeable majority of faculty members who responded here believed that their institution promulgates a philosophy or attitude that ethical behavior is an important aspect of the institution’s functioning. However, the comments for this question indicate that a number of faculty members are skeptical about their institutions’ actions on issues related to academic dishonesty. Out of the 41 comments for

this question, 16 indicated that their institution's actions did not match its rhetoric, while 14 respondents indicated that their institution was lenient on student and/or faculty dishonesty, with 8 indicating that ethics vary considerably within faculties and across the institution. While only around 10% of respondents commented on this section, their answers imply a significant disconnect between faculty and institution on ethics—one that is typified by the following comment: “In a literal sense, yes, that is precisely what my institution does. That is, it is quite vocal in its concern that all members of the institution act ethically. In practice, however, there is a tendency to shove things under the rug if and when ethical improprieties *\*actually\** (*sic*) occur and/or are reported” (Comments Q.9, 2013).

**Question 10. My institution's academic dishonesty policy....** Of 409 respondents, 207 (50.6%) found the policy to be fair and equitable; 99 (24.2%) said that it was effective; 7 (1.7%) indicated that it was too punitive; 87 (21.3%) worried that it was too lenient; 55 (13.5 %) noted that it needed revision; and 57 (13.8%) stated that they don't know. Once again the comments provided valuable insight into the responses. Out of the 117 comments, 91 referred to various inequities in the policy, the vast majority of these suggesting that the policy as written is fine, but bureaucracy, lack of support for faculty pursuing academic dishonesty, and other factors contribute to it not being implemented consistently. Of the 26 comments that did not criticize the policy and procedure, only two praised the way academic dishonesty was handled at the institution. The following is a typical sentiment: “The policy might be fine, but it isn't widely applied so it is largely irrelevant” (Comments, Q.10, 2013). Table 4 summarizes the responses.

**Table 4**  
**Evaluation of Institutional Academic Dishonesty Policy by Institution**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Responses</b>					
	<b>is fair and equitable</b>	<b>is effective</b>	<b>is too punitive</b>	<b>is too lenient</b>	<b>needs revision</b>	<b>don't know</b>
Acadia	9	4	0	5	1	4
Concordia	17	11	3	1	2	4
Dalhousie	5	2	1	3	3	0
McGill	16	6	0	11	5	6
McMaster	32	19	0	12	6	7
Memorial	5	5	0	2	4	4
MTA	15	4	0	6	5	5
U of A	37	18	2	7	6	3
UBC	3	0	0	2	1	0
U of C	6	3	0	3	2	4
UMan	11	4	0	1	2	2
UNB	7	3	1	12	5	5
UPEI	6	1	0	4	3	4
U of R	11	9	0	7	3	2
USask	15	5	0	5	2	2
UVic	5	1	0	1	1	2
UWinn	7	4	0	5	4	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>57</b>

Table 4

**Question 11. My institution's academic dishonesty policy is primarily concerned with . . .** This question has the dual purpose of (a) examining faculty knowledge of their respective institution's policy, and (b) enabling the researcher to compare the institutional policy orientation of each institution as indicated by the faculty members thereof with the results of the policy evaluation framework. In 12 of 17 cases, the researcher's evaluation of the respective institutions' policy orientation was supported by the majority of respondents. In two of the five cases of non-agreement, the University of Victoria and the University of British Columbia, the number of respondents was low. For UVic, the policy review indicated a combination policy, while the faculty responses to

the question were four punishment, one ethics, and three combination, which is not a significant difference. For UBC, the policy review indicated a deterrence orientation, while two respondents chose ethics and four combination—again not a significant variance. However, in the other three cases, the majority of respondents’ opinions were contrary to findings of the policy review. In the case of Concordia, the policy review found that Concordia’s policies and procedures were strongly oriented towards deterrence—the punishment of offenders. Yet, the majority of respondents (11) indicated that they believed Concordia had a combination approach, while 3 respondents indicated an ethics approach and only 2 selected punishment. For Dalhousie, the policy review indicated that the primary orientation was integrity while the survey respondents indicated one punishment, one ethics, and eight combination. In the case of UPEI, the policy review found a bare-bones, punishment-oriented policy. In contrast, only two UPEI respondents selected the punishment option while 10 believed that the policy contains a combined approach (see Table 5 for complete results).

An interesting aspect of the comments section is that 12 out of 47 respondents indicated that their institutional policy was primarily concerned with projecting the perception of being effective while avoiding legal issues, voicing the belief that their institution is primarily concerned with “avoiding trouble and liability while maximizing university profits” (Comments, Q11, 2013).

**Table 5**  
**Policy Orientation (as Indicated by Respondents; Compared with Results of Policy Evaluation Checklist)**

University	punish offenders	helping students to act ethically	combination	don't know	other (Please specify )	Faculty Belief Orient	agrees w/ policy eval.
Acadia	2	3	11	4	1	C	Y
Concordia	3	3	18	4	0	C	N (deterrence)
Dalhousie	1	1	8	0	0	C	N (integrity)
McGill	0	5	21	5	3	C	Y
McMaster	7	1	44	2	4	C	Y
Memorial	6	3	7	0	1	C	Y
Mount Allison	10	1	12	6	0	C	Y
U of A	4	10	41	1	2	C	Y
UBC	0	2	3	0	0	C	N (deterrence)
U of C	4	1	4	3	2	C	Y
U of M	2	3	10	1	1	C	Y
UNB	5	4	11	6	1	C	Y
UPEI	2	0	10	2	1	C	N (deterrence)
U of R	7	3	11	4	1	C	Y
U of S	2	5	12	4	1	C	Y
UVic	4	1	3	0	1	D	N (combo)
UWinn	4	4	9	2	1	C	Y
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16/17 C; 1 D</b>	<b>12/17 Agree</b>

Table 5

### **My Attitude Towards Student Academic Dishonesty: Questions 12-27**

**Question 12. Academic dishonesty is a problem at my institution.** The majority of respondents, 61.7% (254 out of 412), either agreed (202) or strongly agreed (54) that academic dishonesty is a problem at their institution. A further 26.5 % (109 out of 412) were unsure, while only 11.9% (48 disagreeing; one strongly disagreeing) indicated that it is not a problem. In addition, nearly 30% of respondents (26 out of 87) who commented felt compelled to note that while academic dishonesty was an issue at their institution, they



did not feel that it happened any more than at other institutions and that it was not “prevalent” or “out of control” (Comments, Q.12, 2013).

**Question 13. Academic dishonesty is more prevalent at my institution now than in the past.** The response rate for this question ( $n = 309$ ) is much lower than for the previous questions. It may be that a number of respondents who indicated in Question 12 that academic dishonesty was not a problem at their institution felt that answering Question 13 was unnecessary. Given the number of books, newspaper and magazine articles and journal articles bemoaning the rise of academic dishonesty, the results were somewhat surprising: 32 respondents (10.4%) indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed; 113 (36.6 %) indicated that they were not sure; and 164 (53.1%) indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed. The number of comments for this question was also low ( $n = 37$ ). Of those 37 comments, a majority indicated that academic dishonesty was a problem due to international students, changes in technology, or unprepared high school students. While not a typical response, the following quote is a pessimistic view of academic dishonesty that is more in line with the literature indicating academic dishonesty is on the rise: “While Internet plagiarism has waned (because of the ease with which plagiarism can be detected), other forms of cheating, especially hiring others to write or edit papers, has soared” (Comments, Q.13, 2013).

**Question 14. Institutional factors such as \_\_\_\_\_ are contributing to the problem of academic dishonesty at my institution.** Again, as with Question 13, the response rate is lower for this question than the proceeding ones. Again, it is logical to surmise that those participants in the survey who indicated that academic dishonesty was not a problem—or who indicated that they were not sure whether it was a problem or

not—might be inclined to skip this question. The responses identified the following factors: (a) class sizes that are too large, 29 (9.9%); (b) accepting students who are not qualified, 29 (9.9%); (c) valuing research over teaching, 6 (2.0%); (d) penalties for cheating that are not severe enough, 83 (28.2%); (e) policies for dealing with academic dishonesty that are too time-consuming to implement, 89 (30.3%); (f) institutional factors do not contribute to an increase in academic dishonesty, 68 (23.1%); and (g) other, 107 (36.4%). This is the only question in this survey where “other” is the most popular response. The 133 comments for this question, which expand on the “other response” are coded into the following seven categories: (1) class sizes that are too large; (2) students who are not qualified or don’t understand; (3) policies that are not followed consistently; (4) penalties that are not severe enough; (5) policies that are too time-consuming to implement; (6) instructors who are not supported (in opposing student academic dishonesty); and (7) other. There were 32 comments indicating inconsistent application of policy within institutions: “The policy is fine on paper, but is not applied consistently” (Comments, Q14, 2013). Support of faculty in pursuing academic dishonesty was also an issue for 23 respondents, who indicated their belief that faculty members were not supported in this area: “The burden for this issue should not all be on the instructor. Administration seems to lose interest in punishing dishonest students as soon as lawyers become involved” (Comments, Q.14, 2013).

**Question 15. What are the most significant factors contributing to academic dishonesty at your institution?** As with Questions 13 and 14, the response rate ( $n = 237$ ) for this question is lower than for most of the survey. Again, as in Questions 13 and 14, those who responded that academic dishonesty is not a problem at their institution and

those who are unsure might have been less likely to respond to this question. In addition, unlike most questions in the survey, Question 15 is a comment box only, with no options provided. A number of respondents indicated that this question was repetitive, which was deliberate, but which could, combined with the other factors mentioned above, have contributed to the lower number of responses. Although  $n = 237$ , when the comments were separated into thought units (as a number of respondents' comments included ideas that belong in more than one category) during the analysis, the total number rose to 364. The responses were coded into seven categories discussed below.

*Students are not qualified, don't understand, or need to be taught norms.* This category includes 108 comments or 40.9 % of the total. Comments in this section typically focus on the perception that many contemporary students are not adequately prepared to work at a university level and do not seem to understand the concepts of academic dishonesty and institutional norms in the way that instructors intend. The following comments exemplify this position: "High standards and competition among students for limited resources is coupled with a prevalence of weak/disinterested students who view education/their degree as a commodity to be bought with tuition, as opposed to a life experience that needs to be earned"; and "Students cheat today and do so because of 1) lack of awareness; 2) poor writing skills developed early inb (*sic*) the Wikipedia age; 3) they feel other students do so they have to" (Comments, Q.15, 2013).

A recurrent sub-theme here is that significant numbers of international students do not have the English language skills necessary for success in Canadian tertiary education and that they do not understand the concepts of academic dishonesty and plagiarism in a Canadian context. The following quotations demonstrate this view: (a) "Far too many

students, especially those whose first language is not English, are simply not able to cope with the work required”; (b) “Cheating is on the rise, but it is occurring most highly [*sic*] in certain groups of international students. Instructors need more education about how to discourage cheating among these groups, but political correctness stands in the way and everyone suffers”; and (c) “There are many students who cannot handle the work so they see no other way of coping except cheating” (Comments, Q.15, 2013).

The closely related idea that students need to be taught the norms and standards of academia is also prevalent here, as evidenced by these comments: “We are teachers. Let us teach ethical behaviour. It is not always obvious what it is and there are often conflicts between different ethical behaviours ...” and “We do not teach students how to avoid plagiarism. Our courses need to include more emphasis on academic skills” (Comments, Q.15, 2013).

***Technological factors.*** There were 31 responses in this category. Most respondents here believe that technology is a key contributor to a rise in academic dishonesty. For example: “Technology makes it easy and tempting for students to cheat in many ways. Social media and online cheat sites are leading to increased cheating.” Several respondents indicated an inability to do much about technologically fuelled cheating: “There is so much information on the internet about everything, for the students it is like being in a candy store with no supervision. I try to assign topics that cannot be researched on the internet as much as possible, but beyond that we are pretty powerless” (Comments, Q.15, 2013).

***Policy is lenient or not followed consistently.*** This category received 40 responses. As discussed in Questions 8 and 9, many respondents stated that the academic dishonesty

policy at their institution was inconsistently or leniently applied. A common theme is that institutional leniency coupled with instructors ignoring academic dishonesty are primary factors in exacerbating academic dishonesty. For example, (a) “Students will often try to take the easy way out and lenient penalties encourage this behaviour”; (b) “Many of my colleagues exacerbate this situation by ignoring cheating”; and (c) “Students are willing to plagiarise and cheat in other ways because the penalties are not strong enough and can often be avoided” (Comments, Q.15, 2013).

***Students feel pressure.*** In this category, there were 16 respondents, who cited students’ academic workloads, jobs, and external pressures as factors related to cheating: (a) “The pressure—often external, from parents, family—to ‘succeed,’ which usually means ‘getting an A’”; (b) “how they can learn [*sic*] when so many of them hold time-consuming jobs?”; and (c) “Academic dishonesty is often undertaken to cope with what is perceived as an impossible workload” (Comments, Q.15, 2013).

***Societal or cultural factors.*** The 16 respondents in this category noted that societal change in the perception of cheating, and different cultural views of cheating, are factors contributing to student academic dishonesty. The involvement of international students in academic dishonesty was again prominent in this category. For example, comments included “Not sure if this [the rise in academic dishonesty] is a function of personal ethics or changes in the way society values honesty”; and “Culture may be a contributing factor as some international students view plagiarism differently than we do” (Comments, Q.15, 2013).

***Not sure or many factors.*** Twenty-three respondents indicated that as academic dishonesty was a complex subject involving many factors, they were unable to identify “the most significant factors.”

***Other.*** This category received 31 responses of such diversity that they generally had nothing in common with each other or the other categories. One respondent claimed that “professors set assignments and projects that are too easy to cheat on/copy because it is challenging to design methods of evaluation that avoid this. . .” (Comments, Q.15, 2013). Eight comments indicated that some students cheat and that this kind of behaviour has always existed and always will. Several respondents identified “students” as the most significant factor in student academic dishonesty.

**Question 16. My institution is taking well-considered action to address the issues surrounding academic dishonesty.** For this question the results were as follows: 78 (26.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed; 125 (42%) were not sure; 94 (31.5%) agreed or strongly agreed; and 1(0.3%) answered “not applicable”. It is clear that many faculty members are uncertain about what—if any—action their institution is taking against student academic dishonesty. There are only 17 comments for this question. They are coded into the following categories: (a) comprehensive response; (b) response needs tweaking; (c) policy lenient or not followed consistently; (d) punitive; (e) not a priority; and (f) other. Again respondents indicated that consistent application of policy is an issue, with four comments similar to the following: “Institution[-]wide education campaigns about academic dishonesty are needed for students and faculty” (Comments, Q.16).

**Question 17. Upholding high standards of academic honesty is part of my duties to ...** Respondents ( $n = 409$ ) could select more than one option. The results were as follows: 89.3% of respondents selected “my institution”; 91.2% selected “my students”; 91.9% selected “my profession”; 82.9% selected “myself”; and 5.4% selected “other.” No respondents selected “upholding high standards of academic honesty is NOT part of my duties.” The comments were somewhat contradictory. On one hand, a number of commentators indicated that upholding academic honesty is part of their duties to alumni, society, employers, the community, and their religion. In contrast, several respondents indicated that they believed that neither their colleagues nor their institution adhered to the same high standards to which they aspired: “I wish I could uphold high standards but my institution’s regulations and even more so the mechanism meant to enforce those regulations make it impossible” (Comments Q. 17, 2013).

**Question 18. I provide my students with information about our institution’s academic dishonesty policy by ...** A total of 412 respondents answered this question, which allowed for multiple selections. Of these, 367 (89.1%) indicated giving written instructions at the beginning of the semester (e.g., as part of a course outline or syllabus); 172 (41.8%) indicated regularly discussing the issue in class; 189 (45.9%) indicated referring students to the university website; 181 (43.9%) indicated referring students to the university calendar or student handbook; 238 (57.8%) indicated teaching students the academic conventions around citation and use of sources; 307 (50.2%) indicated reviewing the concepts of plagiarism, authorized collaboration, cheating, and so on, before quizzes, exams or other assessments; 17 (4.1%) indicated that they do not discuss the

academic dishonesty policy with students; and 22 (5.3%) selected “other.” There were no comments on this question.

**Question 19. I use the following safeguards to deter academic dishonesty in my classes ...** The responses for this question ( $n = 408$ ) were as follows: 176 (43.1%) reported using the Internet or software to detect plagiarism; 295 (72.3%) reported changing quizzes, exams, and assignments frequently; 171 (41.9%) reported giving different versions of quizzes or exams within the same class; 300 (73.5%) reported closely monitoring students taking quizzes or exams; 142 (34.8%) reported requiring projects or essays to be submitted in stages; 30 (7.4%) reported requiring students to sign an academic integrity pledge on all assessed work; 53 (13%) selected “Other (Please Specify)”; and 16 (3.9%) reported not using safeguards.

There were 109 comments for this question, coded into the following seven categories: (1) checking for plagiarism, 14 comments; (2) formulating assignments that are difficult to plagiarize, 23 comments; (3) requiring drafts, readings, 15 comments; (4) assigning research- or project-based work, 10 comments; (5) teaching about honesty, 8 comments; (6) monitoring exams, 15 comments; and (7) “other,” 24 comments. The comments varied greatly. There was a great deal of cynicism and resignation in some comments; for example: (a) “I wish I could change assignments frequently but don’t have time for that. All those activities distract us from research and only research counts in our annual reports”; and (b) “It is virtually impossible to effectively put in place safeguards to deter dishonesty in assignments, so I have given up including that as a grading mechanism” (Comments, Q.19, 2013). The following respondent is particularly skeptical of academic integrity reinforcement: ““Requiring students to sign an academic integrity



pledge on all assessed work' huh????... [sic] if a student is going to cheat, there is little a 'pledge' will do. does anyone actually attempt this??? [sic]" (Comments Q.19, 2013).

In contrast, others found that different approaches worked for them: "Since I began requiring students to hand in an academic integrity pledge (required to get any grades in the course), the rate of plagiarism (especially copying from the internet) dropped dramatically" and "I press students to find original and interesting topics, since plagiarism is easier when a topic is familiar and often repeated" (Comments Q.19, 2013).

**Question 20. If faced with a clear, but minor case of academic dishonesty (e.g., student copied a couple of phrases or sentences in an assignment or cheated on a quiz), I would ...** Of 407 respondents, 146 (35.9%) would seek advice before acting; 147 (36.1%) would follow their institution's policy exactly; 103 (25.3%) would refer the case to the Dean, Chair or other superior; 171 (42.0%) would deal with the matter informally; 142 (34.9%) would give a reduced grade; 53 (13.0%) would give a grade of F; 5 (1.2%) would ignore it; 51 (12.5%) would do "Other." There are 197 comments when broken into their component thought units, which fall into eight categories: (a) follow policy, 68; (b) meet the student, 45; (c) reduce the grade or give an F, 20; (d) consult with colleagues, 13; (e) allow the student to re-do the assignment, 4; (f) decide based on the context, 21; (g) not sure, 2; and (h) other, 24.

Many comments focused on the problems of reporting students and managing the cumbersome and legalistic nature of the bureaucracy that deals with academic dishonesty are overwhelming. For example, "If a case is minor, it probably cannot withstand full legal scrutiny, therefore it is judged to be a case of poor academic performance rather than a violation of the university's policy and is given a F grade" (Comments, Q.20, 2013).

Significantly, several comments illustrate that faculty members (due to advice or a negative previous experience) ignore what they consider to be minor cases of academic dishonesty. Respondents report, for example, the following compromises: (a) “We can barely deal with major cases, minor cases, I’d talk to the students directly or just let it go”; (b) “I often seek advice from our Office of Academic Integrity for minor cases. They often advise me not to follow the institution’s policy exactly and not to report certain incidents”; (c) “Previously I always followed the institution [*sic*] policy and went through formal channels for reporting. Having had some difficult experiences, if the matter is minor I deal with it myself....I would still report a major violation” (Comments, Q.20).

**Question 21. If faced with a clear, major case of academic dishonesty (e.g., student copied most of a paper or assignment or clearly cheated on an exam), I would ...** Of 411 respondents, 150 (36.5%) would seek advice before acting; 285 (69.3%) would follow their institution’s policy exactly; 225 (54.7%) would refer the case to the Dean, Chair or other superior; 16 (3.9%) would deal with the matter informally; 28 (6.8%) would give a reduced grade; 117 (28.5%) would give a grade of F; none (0%) would ignore it; and 18 (4.4%) would do “Other.”

The 75 comments were broken down into 76 thought units for coding into the following six categories: (a) follow policy, 45 respondents; (2) meet the student, 4 respondents; (3) reduce the grade or give an F, 4 respondents; (4) consult with colleagues or a supervisor, 5 respondents; (5) decide based on the context, 9 respondents; and (6) do “Other,” 9 respondents. As in Question 20, numerous comments address following policy and the frustrations of doing so as follows:

1. Frustratingly, a prof cannot decide on the penalty for an academic offence. The case must be referred to the relevant committee. It may be weeks to months before the committee deals with the matter .... Given this, it may be best to ignore the matter so that the other students in the class don't suffer from it;
2. Most recently I had cases that appeared to be quite bad cases of plagiarism (detected by Turnitin) and I decided to follow procedure. As a result the matter was taken out of my hands. I regret this, because I now feel it might be better for me to deal with it 'internally' (within the course) (Comments, Q. 21, 2013).

**Question 22. If you have referred a case of academic dishonesty to your Dean, Chair or anyone else at your institution, please rate your satisfaction with how the case was handled.** The response rate for this question was  $n = 185$ . Of those, 15 (8.1%) reported being very unsatisfied; 18 (9.7%) reported being unsatisfied; 37 (20.0%) reported feeling neutral; 78 (42.2%) reported being satisfied; and 37 (20.0%) reported being very satisfied. Given the overall level of frustration and cynicism expressed about institutional academic dishonesty policies and their application in the responses to other questions, these results are somewhat surprising. One possible reason for this apparent contradiction might be suggested by the comments indicating that the respondents' level of satisfaction is dependent on the individuals with whom they are dealing. There are 56 comments, which were broken down into 76 thought units for coding into seven categories: (1) satisfied, 23 respondents; (2) not supported, 9 respondents; (3) process not effective or timely, 9 respondents; (4) penalties are lenient, 6 respondents; (5) case ignored, 4 respondents; (6) not informed of result, 3 respondents; and "other," 22 respondents.

**Question 23. In the last two years how often do you believe the following behaviors have occurred in your classes?** The response rate varied for each element in this question. The options for this question are (a) serious plagiarism (never = 152 [39%]; 1-4 times = 199 [51%];  $n = 390$ ); (b) minor plagiarism (never = 50 [13%]; 1-4 times = 169 [44%];  $n = 384$ ); (c) using unauthorized materials OR getting or giving unauthorized assistance on a quiz or test (never = 180 [46.9%]; 1-4 times = 146 [38%];  $n = 384$ ); (d) using unauthorized materials OR getting or giving unauthorized assistance on a mid-term or final examination (never = 207 [54.3%]; 1-4 times = 138 [36.2%];  $n = 386$ ); (e) unauthorized collaboration on an assignment or project (never = 117 [31.1%]; 1-4 times = 155 [41.2%];  $n = 386$ ); and (f) “other” (never = 35 [60.3%]; 1-4 times = 17 [29.3%];  $n = 58$ ). For all options, “never” and “1-4 times” were the most common responses (see Table 6 for a complete breakdown). Comments were coded into five categories: (1) other type of academic dishonesty; (2) preventative measures; (3) option not assigned; (4) not sure; and (5) “other.” The respondents indicated several different ways their students cheat that were not listed. These included (a) “submitting work that was written by someone else such as a friend or even someone hired to do the assignment”; (b) “changing a returned multiple-choice exam and trying to get it regraded [*sic*] for more marks (I had a scan of the original)”; and (c) “submitting work that was previously submitted in another class.” Still others noted that they no longer assign certain types of work due to the prevalence of academic dishonesty: “My numbers would have been much, much (!) higher [*sic*] but in two of my undergrad classes I have done away with assignments because cheating was getting out of hand.” While many respondents commented that they suspect a lot more cheating than they identify, others—particularly in mathematics, physics, and the fine

arts—indicated that plagiarism and academic dishonesty as a whole was not an issue in their classes (Comments Q. 23, 2013).

**Table 6 Suspected Cases of Academic Dishonesty**

<b>Type of Academic dishonesty</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>1-4 times</b>	<b>5-7 times</b>	<b>8-10 times</b>	<b>More than ten times</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Serious Plagiarism (copying of a major part or whole of a piece of work)	<b>39.0%</b> 152	<b>51%</b> 199	<b>2.8%</b> 11	<b>3.6%</b> 14	<b>3.6%</b> 14	<b>390</b>
Minor plagiarism (copying a few phrases or lines)	<b>13.0%</b> 50	<b>44%</b> 169	<b>9.9%</b> 38	<b>10.7%</b> 41	<b>22.4%</b> 86	<b>384</b>
Using unauthorized materials OR getting or giving unauthorized assistance on a quiz or test	<b>46.9%</b> 180	<b>38%</b> 146	<b>3.1%</b> 12	<b>3.1%</b> 12	<b>8.9%</b> 34	<b>384</b>
Using unauthorized materials OR getting or giving unauthorized assistance on a on a mid-term or final examination	<b>54.3%</b> 207	<b>36.2%</b> 138	<b>2.4%</b> 9	<b>1.6%</b> 6	<b>5.5%</b> 21	<b>381</b>
Unauthorized collaboration on an assignment or project	<b>31.1%</b> 117	<b>41.2%</b> 155	<b>8.8%</b> 33	<b>3.7%</b> 14	<b>15.2%</b> 57	<b>376</b>
Other (please specify below)	<b>60.3%</b> 35	<b>29.3%</b> 17	<b>1.7%</b> 1	<b>0.0%</b> 0	<b>8.6%</b> 5	<b>58</b>

Table 6

**Question 24. How many times have you responded to an incidence of academic dishonesty in the last two years?** For this question,  $n = 411$ . Of respondents, 88 (21.4%) indicated “never”; 227 (55.2%) indicated “1-4 times”; 5 (12.9%) indicated “5-7 times”; 12 (2.9%) indicated “8-10 times”; and 31 (7.5%) indicated “more than 10 times.” Most of the participants reported responding to student academic dishonesty 1-4 times, with a significant minority (21.4%) never responding and 7.5% responding more than ten times. Comments were not solicited for this question.

**Question 25. Typically I respond to academic dishonesty by ...** For this question,  $n = 399$ . Of respondents, 274 (68.7%) report following their institution’s policy

exactly; 180 (45.1%) report assigning a lower grade; (c) 7 (1.8%) report ignoring it; and 43 (10.8%) report doing something “other.” The number who responded “follow institutional policy exactly” was higher than in Question 20 about minor cases, and lower than Question 21 about major cases. Also, seven respondents selected “ignore”—in contrast to zero on Questions 20 and 21. Comments were not coded as the initial evaluation revealed that they largely mimicked the comments from Questions 20 and 21. Several respondents noted the similarity of this question and Question 21—this overlap was a deliberate choice made to see if the answers would be consistent, which is the case.

**Question 26. If you have ever ignored a case of academic dishonesty, why did you choose to do so?** In this question,  $n = 377$ . Of respondents, 182 (48.3%) indicated that the evidence was not conclusive; 48 (12.7%) indicated that it takes too much time to document and report; 33 (8.8%) indicated that administration does not support faculty in academic dishonesty cases; 38 (10.1%) indicated that offending students are treated leniently; 12 (3.2%) indicated that there were possible legal or professional repercussions; 155 (41.1%) answered “not applicable”; and 25 (6.6%) answered “other (please specify below).” There were 56 comments, coded into seven categories: (1) never ignore; (2) no support or time or peers; (3) second chance for students; (4) teaching/learning; (5) evidence not sufficient; (6) minor: gave warning; and (7) other.

Numerous respondents echoed this sentiment: “I have never ignored it deliberately. Of course, though, there must have been cases that I was not aware of.” Several others report skirting their institution’s policy: “I’ve had students resubmit an assignment after chatting about their dishonesty or what constitutes dishonesty for instance. The policy doesn’t allow for professors to do that, so sometimes I allow a student a reprieve and to

demonstrate improvement.” Still others are leery of the legalistic nature of academic dishonesty proceedings: “It is impossible and counter-productive to go forward with a case without concrete evidence. Those students are flagged and all future work in the course is more carefully scrutinized” (Comments Q. 26, 2013).

**Question 27. My attitude towards academic dishonesty has changed during my teaching career.** In this question,  $n = 343$ ; yes = 131 (38.2%); no = 201 (58.6); and N/A = 11 (3.2%). Comments by respondents whose attitude had changed were almost equally divided between those who had become more lenient over time (“Previously, I used to approach all cases of AD with a set opinion that the student had intentionally acted this way, yet through meeting with students I find that some of them just don’t know and I have used this as a learning opportunity...”) and those who had become more strict (“I now have a zero-tolerance attitude about academic dishonesty”) (Comments, Q.27, 2013). Significantly, both respondents who became more lenient and those who became stricter state that their motivation is based on notions of fairness to students and duty to students and institutions. Another common theme was a sense of resignation about dealing with a burgeoning problem with a perceived lack of support:

I have become disillusioned. I consider academic honesty to be extremely important but I do not feel that the same can be said about my institution as a whole hence I am tempted to give up on the issue. Tilting at windmills requires time and energy. As I do not have a surplus of either during term, what I do have is best devoted to the honest students. (Comments Q. 27, 2013)

## **My Colleagues' Attitudes Towards Student Academic Dishonesty: Questions 28-29**

**Question 28. My colleagues demonstrate their commitment to high standards of academic honesty by ...** For this question,  $n = 411$ . The respondents could choose all of the options that applied. Of respondents, 193 (47.3%) reported that colleagues followed the institution's academic dishonesty policy; 201 (49.3%) reported that they taught their students about the academic conventions for sources and citation; 142 (34.8%) reported that they taught students about their institution's values and expectations; 195 (47.8%) reported that they demonstrated a high degree of commitment to teaching and student achievement; 122 (29.9%) said they didn't know; 22 (5.4%) selected "other"; and 37 (9.1%) reported that their colleagues do NOT demonstrate commitment to high standards of academic honesty. There were 89 comments, which were coded into seven categories: (1) most show commitment to academic honesty; (2) it varies; (3) don't discuss or don't know; (4) many do not; (5) awareness/context; (6) more punishment; (7) and other. The comments run the gamut from "I am proud of my colleagues' approaches to academic integrity" to "some do— some don't" to "I regret to say that only a handful of us do much about academic dishonesty" (Comments, Q.28, 2013). This indicates that faculty members believe that some colleagues uphold high standards of academic dishonesty, some do not and for many of their peers they simply have no idea. Another common theme is that the issue is not discussed which is somewhat surprising given that a majority of respondents claimed that they learned about their institutions' academic integrity policy through discussion with colleagues. An interesting subset of the comments indicates that institutional culture plays a significant role in academic dishonesty as shown in the following two quotations:



1. I believe that there is an inadequate amount of time devoted to the issue at all levels. Tools such as Turnitin.com are used instead of exercising scrutiny and judgement on papers. Students are not necessarily taught why to cite or how to paraphrase and instead wind up learning how to cheat the system in place.
2. It is far easier to ignore the problem than it is to deal with it. It is WORK to prove academic dishonesty. (Comments Q. 28, 2013)

**Question 29. At my institution, academic dishonesty is dealt with in a consistent manner.** For this question,  $n = 409$ . Of respondents, 33 (8.1%) strongly disagree; 77 (18.8%) disagree; 139 (34.0%) are not sure; 140 (34.2%) agree; and 20 (4.9%) strongly agree. As is evident, the numbers for “not sure” and “agree” are roughly equal, while those for the other categories are much lower. The comments reflected this relative uncertainty of respondents about the level of consistency of response at their respective institutions. Numerous comments indicated that the response to academic dishonesty was consistent within the respondents’ departments, units, or faculties, but that they suspected that this was not the case in other areas of the university. Typical comments of this type include the belief that (a) “Arts faculty are pretty consistent, but I am not sure that is true in other faculties. I have heard academic dishonesty is rampant in engineering, for example”; (b) there is a “need for greater consistency across faculties in how the provisions of the policy are interpreted and administered”; and (c) there is “wide variability between individual instructors, departments and faculties in terms of teaching ways to avoid academic dishonesty, attempts to detect dishonesty, and the punishments given for academic dishonesty” (Comments, Q.29, 2013). Many respondents indicated that the variance is faculty-related and not policy-dependent: “The institution has set out

clear guidelines for the faculty to follow, but the faculty do not always follow these guidelines” (Comment Q.29, 2013).

### **Three Changes: Question 30**

**Question 30. If you could change any three aspects of your institution to remedy academic dishonesty, what would they be?** Question 30 was a purely qualitative opportunity for respondents to provide their ideas for ways in which their institution could be changed to remedy student academic dishonesty. The question was deliberately left as open as possible, so as to not limit the range of responses. There were 279 responses which were divided into 500 distinct thought units and then coded into seven categories: (1) clarity and consistency, 80 comments; (2) teaching and discussion, 15 comments; (3) punishment, 57 comments; (4) institutional support and the use of technology, 81 comments; (5) orientation or introductory courses, 36 comments; (6) streamlining the academic dishonesty process, 42 comments; and (7) other, 54 comments. As has been the case with many of these comments, the opinions show a great deal of variety.

***Clarity and consistency.*** Overwhelmingly, the respondents in this category wanted consistency of policy and its application. Many commented that their institution has to do a better job of educating students and faculty members on this issue. For a significant number, the delineation—or lack thereof—of concepts such as *intent*, and *major* and *minor plagiarism*, are problematic. Some faculty members want the informal handling of academic dishonesty to be eliminated in order to achieve a consistent response. Others want a clear policy for reporting and recording the informal resolution of academic dishonesty so that repeat offenders are tracked. Another issue is student understanding of

policy; many respondents report that students do not seem to have the necessary understanding of what actually constitutes academic dishonesty: “[We need] Consistency. Clarity (the language used to describe the process is not language the students, by and large, and especially the academically weaker students, understand)” (Faculty Attitudes, Comment Q.30, 2013).

***Teaching and discussion.*** In this category, respondents overwhelmingly want meaningful dialogue between students, faculty members, and administrators, as well as pedagogical, not punishment-based solutions. These responses include those addressing educational and learning factors and those specifically aimed at academic dishonesty. The academic dishonesty–focused responses mention such initiatives as the development of honor codes or required ethics courses, along with the need to make students part of the solution: “Involve students more substantively on prevention and punishment of academic dishonesty”; and “So long as they [students] view classes primarily as jumping through hoops, and grades simply as a means of getting a degree, they will cheat” (Faculty Attitudes, Comment Q.30, 2013). Advocates of more communication about academic dishonesty also wanted public reporting of academic dishonesty hearings: “. . . I think many students don’t believe there will be consequences to cheating even if they are caught or that the consequences are less dire than the benefits to them if they get away with it. Publicly reported hearings would help convince students that this is happening” (Comment Q.30, 2013).

Numerous respondents wanted more systemic reform. A significant number cited the negative effect of large class sizes on learning and on the development of relationships between faculty members and students: “I would like to see proper advising in the

departments, the way it was of old: a student should be assigned to a faculty member so that regular meetings could be held and the student would ‘absorb’ proper scholarship from the faculty member. Unfortunately, with our large student to faculty ratio, this is near impossible.” Others see the issue as one of enforcement: “Reduce faculty to student ratios; the larger the class the more difficult it is to catch problems or to guide students to avoid plagiarism etc [*sic*]” (Comment Q.30, 2013).

Still others advocated making more fundamental changes: (a) “Retreat from a trivial teach and test model”; (b) “Remove competitive grading. The best students don’t get the best grades . . . most of the A grade cohort are only grade chasers”; and (c) “Commit. . . to teaching skills required at several levels of the program. Align . . . core skills among courses in the same degree programs (establishing norms for the discipline)[*sic*]” (Comment Q. 30, 2013).

The final key theme in this category is student preparation and entrance standards: “Dramatically raise the standard of acceptance so that not only are students of higher quality, but so that the class sizes are dramatically reduced” (Faculty Attitudes, Comment Q.30, 2013). The struggles of unprepared students—especially those whose first language is not English—is considered a key driver of academic dishonesty:

1. Raise academic standards for incoming students and require higher standards of English for non-native speaking students. The frequent complaint from many students caught cheating is that they did not understand the rules because they are not native speakers of English. In many cases, this is simply not believable because of the English language requirements [for] incoming

students . . . unless of course they also cheated on taking those tests as well [sic].

2. Better screening of international Chinese students to ensure they enter with sufficiently solid English language skills to succeed in classes. Virtually 100% of the academic dishonesty cases in my dep[artment] and in my faculty involve international Chinese students (I know from the assoc[iate] dean who handles ac[ademic] dishonesty in our faculty it was 100% for winter term 2011 and fall term 2012); when they attend the hearings, it is almost always the case that they can barely communicate in English, to the point that you worry about the process being fair if they can't understand the questions you are asking in the hearings. (Comment Q.30, 2013)

***Punishment.*** One of the clearest and widest divides regarding student academic dishonesty relates to punishment. As noted above, there are a significant number of faculty members in this survey who believe that their institutions' policy is too punitive. They argue the need for "less punitive and more educational approaches in dealing with issues pertaining to academic dishonesty." In contrast, an equally significant voice in this survey indicates that academic dishonesty is not dealt with harshly enough at their institutions. There were numerous calls for "harsher punishments," "stronger punishments to act as stronger deterrents," and a commitment to "do away with the 'everybody gets a second chance rule'." At the far end of the punishment continuum were complaints about the present policy: "Now an F8 (F with academic penalty) disappear [sic] from transcript after 2 years, I don't understand why it doesn't stay there forever." Some respondents called for "a zero-tolerance policy towards cheating—one offense results in immediate expulsion

and **blacklisting at every university in Alberta** [*sic*].” The desire to punish also applies to other faculty members: “Clearly intentional acts of academic dishonesty (among students and faculty) should be grounds for expulsion or dismissal,” and there should be “clear consequences [for] faculty members who do NOT [*sic*] punish students for academic dishonesty” (Comment Q.30, 2013).

***Institutional support and the use of technology.*** Commentators here were subdivided into three sub-themes: (1) support for faculty dealing with academic dishonesty; (2) support for faculty to prevent academic dishonesty; and (3) support for students to help them avoid academic dishonesty. Comments addressing support for faculty dealing with academic dishonesty reflected the view that faculty members are expected to bear full responsibility for preventing and dealing with the misconduct and that they do have administrative support for doing so: “And faculty should be encouraged by administration and feel ‘safe’ in reporting incidents of academic dishonesty. This is not the case” (Comment. Q. 30, 2013). Support for preventing academic dishonesty was divided into two groups: those who wanted pedagogical support (smaller class sizes, more teaching assistants, and more workshops and training about the issue) and those who wanted plagiarism software—Turnitin being the most popular candidate—or administrative support specifically for dealing with academic dishonesty. The minority of respondents calling for more support for students wanted to better help them avoid academic dishonesty. For example, one respondent felt the university should “provide more language support for ESL [English as a Second Language] students and financial support for foreign students—combining difficulty with the language and family pressure to

succeed given the high cost of education is a formula that invites academic dishonesty” (Comment Q.30, 2013).

***Orientation or introductory courses.*** Respondents here were particularly concerned with orienting new students—especially international students—to the norms and expectations of university work. They wanted to “create a better comprehensive approach to imparting academic honesty in the first year” (Comment. Q.30, 2013) and admit foreign language speakers to programs only after one full year of full-time ESL training with the aim of having students who could function effectively in English. Numerous respondents felt that courses or workshops on academic honesty should be mandatory and repeated more than once during the student’s academic career. Similarly, there are many calls for regular workshops, and other training on preventing and dealing with academic dishonesty, for faculty members (Comment Q.30, 2013).

***Streamlining the academic dishonesty process.*** Most respondents here simply want a process that doesn’t put the onus on instructors and one that is less time-consuming and bureaucratic. They suggest: “Take the administrative responsibility OFF of instructors, so that we can report it and get on with our real work which is teaching not policing”; and “hire more people to process cases so that it doesn’t take 2-3 months for the whole business to be over with” (Comment Q.30, 2013).

***Other.*** The “other” comments category, by definition, is a miscellaneous collection of comments. Most significantly, there are numerous comments reflecting an attitude of capitulation to cheating. The three most pertinent comments align with the most common themes in this study: (1) the workload involved in confronting academic dishonesty (“The work is enormous and usually students have lawyers and win so a lot of faculty don’t

bother reporting it”); (2) the pragmatic view of cheating from a student perspective (“Currently, for a student about to fail a course, cheating is quite a reasonable gamble”); and (3) institutions accepting under-prepared students (“knowing we consistently accept students (future teachers) with low GPAs who acknowledge their difficulty [with and] disdain [for] writing (for example), I can’t even begin to think of three wishes [*sic*]. . . why does learning have to be ‘consumed’ and ‘easy’?”) (Comment Q.30, 2013).



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Discussion of Results**

#### **and Recommendations for Future Research**

##### **Review of the Study**

This study explores faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty at 17 selected Canadian universities. As an aid to the reader, this final chapter begins with a re-statement of the research problems and a brief summary of the research methodology. Following this summary, the results are discussed and interpreted. Then, the relationship between these findings and previous research is explored. The study concludes with a series of recommendations for educators and recommendations for future research.

**Statement of the problems.** (a) Do the institution's academic dishonesty policies focus on integrity or rule compliance (i.e., deterrence) or a combination of the two? (b) How do the academic dishonesty policies of each of the selected universities compare to the framework for an effective policy advocated by Whitley and Keith-Spiegel? (c) What are typical faculty attitudes and beliefs towards student academic dishonesty? (d) What are typical faculty beliefs about their institutions' policies surrounding student academic dishonesty? (e) Is there a relationship between institutional policy and faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty?

**Review of the methodology.** As detailed in Chapter 3, this study used a quantitative survey of faculty attitudes at 17 selected Canadian universities bolstered with qualitative comments for most questions. The results of the survey were compared with a qualitative evaluation of each institution's academic dishonesty policies and procedures, which was converted into a quantitative score for each institution.

**Summary of results.** The questions in the faculty survey were separated into five sections: (a) Affiliation and Teaching Responsibilities, Questions 1-5; (b) Institutional Academic Integrity Policy, Questions 6-11; (c) My Attitude Towards Student Academic Dishonesty, Questions 12-27; (d) My Colleagues' Attitudes Towards Student Academic Dishonesty, Questions 28-29; and (e) Three Changes, Question 30.

**Section 1.** Seventeen institutions are included in the study. A total of 412 faculty members from those institutions completed the survey. Only those primarily or exclusively teaching undergraduates were included. Respondents represented a cross-section of academic ranks and teaching experience (see p.50 for complete details).

**Section 2.** The questions in this section are intended to gauge the respondents' knowledge of and attitudes towards their respective institutions.

*Knowledge of policy.* The results showed that “discussion with colleagues” was the most common way of learning about institutional academic dishonesty policies (61.2% of respondents). Websites (34.6%), institutional orientation (35.6%), and academic catalogue (33.9%) were also popular. The comments indicated that many respondents did not concern themselves with the policy until triggered by an external stimulus—most commonly encountering student academic dishonesty or being reminded by institutional contact (e.g., an email reminder to include policy details on course syllabi).

More than 90% of respondents considered themselves to be familiar with or knowledgeable about their institution's policy. Among comments, those addressing the lack of consistent implementation of the policy were the most common. Nearly 63% of respondents did not know which stakeholders were involved in the development or revision of their institutions academic dishonesty policy.

*Fair and equitable policy.* While more than 50% of respondents considered their institutional policy to be fair and equitable, only approximately 24% considered their institution's policy to be effective. The comments here illuminated the reason for this apparent contradiction. Simply put, a recurring theme of the comments is that “the policy is fine, but it is not implemented consistently” (Comment, Q. 10, 2013).

*Policy Orientation.* The last question in this section explores the institutional policy orientation. Policies were graded as integrity, rule compliance (i.e., deterrence), or a combination. In the faculty survey, the respondents at 16 of 17 institutions rated their policy as a combination. This assessment was supported by the policy review, which agreed with faculty opinion in 12 of 17 cases. Again, the comments in this section reflected significant dissatisfaction with the way in which academic dishonesty policies are implemented and enforced; numerous comments implied that the institution is primarily concerned with saving face rather than dealing with the issue.

**Section 3.** This section of the survey explores individual respondents' attitudes towards student academic dishonesty. Nearly 62% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that academic dishonesty is a problem at their respective institutions, while less than 12% indicated that it was not. Of that 12%, comments indicated that respondents believed that academic dishonesty occurs but is not a problem— it is at a level no more or less than at any other institution. Just over 53% of respondents believed that academic dishonesty is more prevalent than in the past, while nearly 37% were unsure.

*Factors contributing to academic dishonesty.* Attitudes towards the contribution of institutional factors to academic dishonesty varied significantly. Unlike all of the other questions in this study, “other” was the preferred response here, with more than 36% of

respondents choosing it. There are 133 comments divided into seven categories, with “policy not enforced consistently” and “faculty not supported” being the most common. “Penalties for cheating are not severe enough” (28.2%) and “policies for dealing with academic dishonesty are too time consuming to follow” (30.3%) were also popular responses, while “institutional factors are not contributing to an increase in academic dishonesty” was chosen by 23.1% of respondents. Class sizes that are too large and admitting students who are not qualified each made up 9.9% of the responses.

The question, “What are the most significant factors contributing to academic dishonesty at your institution,” was among the few in this survey that solicited comments without offering options. Nearly 41% of these comments referred to students’ lack of preparation or lack of knowledge understanding of rules. Again leniency of punishment or lack of consistency in implementation or application of the policy was a common theme, with approximately 15% of respondents indicating that this was a major contributing factor to academic dishonesty.

*Institutional Response.* Regarding the actions that institutions are taking to remedy student academic dishonesty, 42% of respondents believed that their institution was taking “well-considered action,” while 31.5% did not believe that this was the case.

*Upholding academic honesty.* Asked if upholding standards of academic dishonesty was part of their duties, approximately 90% of respondents indicated that it is part of their duty to themselves, their students and their profession. Respondents reported providing information to students regarding academic dishonesty in a variety of ways: 89.1% give written instructions at the beginning of the semester (e.g., as part of a course outline or syllabus); 41.8% regularly discuss the issue in class; 45.9% refer students to the

university website; 43.9% refer students to the university calendar or student handbook; 57.8% actually teach students the academic conventions around citation and use of sources; 50.2% review the concepts of plagiarism, authorized collaboration, cheating, and so on, before quizzes, exams or other assessments; and only 4.1% do not discuss the academic dishonesty policy with students.

Further, most respondents use some kind of safeguard to discourage academic dishonesty: 43.1% use the Internet or software to detect plagiarism; 72.3% change quizzes, exams and assignments frequently; 41.9% give different versions of quizzes or exams within the same class; 73.5% closely monitor students taking quizzes or exams; 34.8% require projects or essays to be submitted in stages; 7.4% require students to sign an academic integrity pledge on all assessed work; and only 3.9% do not use safeguards.

When faced with a “clear, but minor case of academic dishonesty (e.g., student copied a couple of phrases or sentences in an assignment or cheated on a quiz),” respondents indicated that they act as follows: 146 (35.9%) would seek advice before acting; 147 (36.1%) would follow their institution’s policy exactly; 103 (25.3%) would refer the case to a Dean, Chair or other superior; 171 (42.0%) would deal with the matter informally; 142 (34.9%) would give a reduced grade; 53 (13.0%) would give a grade of F; 5 (1.2%) would ignore it; and 51 (12.5%) would do something “other.” The focus of most comments here is the difficulty of determining intent in cases of academic dishonesty and the overly judicious and time-consuming nature of academic dishonesty proceedings.

Responses to the same question about “major cases” of academic dishonesty are similar, but the percentage of those who would handle the incident informally was much lower (only 3.9%), while those who would ignore it altogether dropped to zero.

Conversely, the numbers of those following their institutions' policy exactly rose to 69.3% and of those who would refer the case to the Dean, Chair or other superior increased to 54.7%. Surprisingly, given the apparent dissatisfaction with the way academic dishonesty is dealt with at their institutions, more than 62% of respondents indicated that they are satisfied with the way the cases of academic dishonesty were handled by their institutions' administration. Comments, however, indicate that this satisfaction is dependent on the particular individual with whom the respondent has to interact with when reporting academic dishonesty.

*Responding to academic dishonesty.* The next group of questions are intended to explore the difference, if any, between how many times respondents believed that academic dishonesty happened in their classes and how often they responded. For all listed categories of academic dishonesty, the response rate of the survey participants to the dishonesty was lower than the rates of suspected dishonesty: 61% of respondents reported suspecting academic dishonesty 1-4 times, while just over 55% said they responded to student academic dishonesty 1-4 times. A further 21.4% indicated never having responded, while 7.5% said they responded more than ten times.

The next question, "I typically respond to academic dishonesty by...." elicited fewer responses of following policy exactly in minor instances of academic dishonesty and more such responses in major cases. Also, the number of respondents who indicated that they would ignore the dishonesty rose slightly from the previous questions. However, in response to the question "Have you ever ignored a case of academic dishonesty?" more than 40% of respondents indicated that they had never ignored it. Regarding changes in attitude towards academic dishonesty, nearly 59% of respondents indicated that their

attitude had not changed. Of those whose attitude had changed, the number who reported becoming more lenient was nearly equal to the number who said they had become stricter.

**Section 4.** This section explores the respondents' opinions regarding their colleagues' commitment to maintaining high standards of academic honesty. While less than 10% of respondents indicated that their colleagues did not demonstrate a commitment to academic honesty, nearly 30% indicated that they did not know what their colleagues believed about academic dishonesty. In the comments, a persistent theme is that the issue is not discussed except among one's most trusted colleagues. The final question in this section asked whether study participants believed that their institution deals with academic dishonesty consistently. Approximately 34% of respondents selected "not sure" and "agree," respectively, with the other options garnering low response. This may reflect uncertainty expressed in the comments; respondents were sure of consistency in their own academic unit but uncertain of what happens in other parts of the institution.

**Section 5.** The final question of the survey was "If you could change any three aspects of your institution to remedy academic dishonesty what would they be?" This question elicited 279 comments, which were broken down into 500 thought units in seven categories. These responses suggest feelings of frustration: frustration with being required to police academic dishonesty; frustration with underprepared students, particularly those whose language skills are weak; frustration with time-consuming and overly legalistic academic dishonesty procedures; and frustration at a perceived lack of support from administration when dealing with academic dishonesty.

Overall, the survey indicated that faculty respondents at the 17 universities under study believe that academic dishonesty is a problem, and that lack of student preparation

and lenient, time-consuming, and/or inconsistently applied policies contribute to this problem. The consensus—supported by the policy review based on the work of Whitley and Keith-Spiegel—is that the policies as written are fine, yet they don't seem to be a solution to the issue.

## **Discussion of Results**

### **Interpretation of findings.**

*Research question 1. Do the institution's academic dishonesty policies focus on integrity or rule compliance (i.e., deterrence) or a combination of the two?* It is clear from the policy review—which was corroborated by the faculty survey in most cases—that academic dishonesty policies in Canada are primarily a combination of integrity and rule compliance (i.e., deterrence). In 16 of 17 institutions, most faculty members who responded believed that their institutions' policy is a combination of integrity and rule compliance. In 12 of 17 cases, this belief matched the policy evaluation. In two of the five cases of non-agreement, the University of Victoria and the University of British Columbia, the number of respondents was low. Furthermore, differences in the number of respondents selecting each category were slight. For UVic, the policy review indicated a combination policy, while four faculty respondents chose punishment, one ethics, and three combination. For UBC, the policy review indicated a deterrence orientation, while two respondents indicated integrity and four combination—again, not a significant difference. In these two cases, the difference between the survey and the review is simply too slight to be significant. However, in the other three cases, most respondents' opinions are contrary to findings of the policy review. In the case of Concordia, the policy review found that Concordia's policies and procedures were strongly oriented towards rule



compliance (deterrence) through the punishment of offenders. Yet the majority of respondents (11) indicated that they believed Concordia has a combination approach, while three respondents indicated an integrity approach and only two indicated rule compliance. For Dalhousie, the policy review indicated that the primary orientation was integrity, while the survey respondents selected rule compliance (1), integrity (1), and combination (8). In the case of UPEI, the policy review found a bare-bones policy focused on rule compliance. In contrast, only two UPEI respondents selected the punishment(rule compliance) option while 10 believe that the policy is a combined approach. While the researcher is unsure why the policy review findings vary from faculty opinions, it could be due to the disconnect between rhetoric and application in these policies and procedures. Simply put, every university in the study mentions the importance of academic integrity and affirms that they expect students to act ethically. Regrettably, there are often no follow-up provisions for actually teaching students to do so. In the case of Dalhousie, the contradictory result might simply reflect how recently the institution adopted an integrity focus; punishment, or rule compliance, is still a dominant theme in discussions of academic dishonesty. In conclusion, it is clear that academic dishonesty policies at the selected institutions are primarily oriented towards a combination of the deterrence and integrity approaches.

***Research question 2.*** *How do the academic dishonesty policies of each of the selected universities compare to the framework for an effective policy advocated by Whitley and Keith-Spiegel?* Two institutions scored at the Honor Code level of 90-100%. Eleven of 17 (64.7%) institutions scored between 80 and 90%, indicating a Mature policy, while the remaining four (23.5%) scored between 70 and 76%, indicating a Radar Screen

policy. The relatively high scores of all the institutions indicate that the policies have addressed the majority of the items on Whitley and Keith Spiegel's scale of effective policy. The main difference between the four institutions with Radar Screen level policies and the others is that the Radar Screen level policies tend to lack support. The basic foundations of the policy are there, but the level of publicity, training, and follow-up found in the Mature policies are lacking. In addition, the institutions with Radar Screen level academic dishonesty policies tend to have the policies and procedures in a variety of locations which must be searched for rather than providing a centralized location, e.g., on an academic integrity webpage.

***Research question 3.*** *What are typical faculty attitudes towards and beliefs about student academic dishonesty?* When looking at the huge variance in attitudes and opinions of the faculty members who completed this survey, it appears that the simple answer to this question is that there is no such thing as a typical faculty member's attitude towards student academic dishonesty. In fact, the truth is more nuanced than that. There are several areas in which faculty attitudes are common enough to be considered typical.

*Typical attitude 1.* More than 62% believe that academic dishonesty is a problem at their institution, while 53% believe that academic dishonesty is more prevalent than in the past. Therefore, Typical Attitude 1 is that academic dishonesty is a problem and that the problem is growing worse.

Regarding institutional factors contributing to academic dishonesty, opinions varied. 23% of respondents indicated that institutional factors do not contribute to academic dishonesty. In contrast, approximately 30% indicated that lenient penalties and excessively time-consuming procedures are contributing factors. Also, more than 33%

selected “other.” In this case, no single attitude towards institutional factors’ (not including policy and procedure) influence on academic dishonesty can be termed typical.

*Typical attitude 2.* The responses to Question 15 (regarding the most significant factors contributing to academic dishonesty) indicate that respondents believe that students’ lack of knowledge about the conventions of writing and citation, along with under-preparation for university-level work—particularly as regards those who are non-native speakers of English—are significant factors in the rise of academic dishonesty. Therefore, Typical Attitude 2 is that unprepared students, who do not have the requisite academic skills to succeed in university, contribute to academic dishonesty.

*Typical attitude 3.* Most respondents believe that upholding high standards of academic honesty is a duty to their institution (89.3%), to their students (91.2%), to their profession (91.9%), and to themselves (82.9%). Therefore, Typical Attitude 3 is that upholding high standards of academic honesty is an important function of university instructors.

Many respondents would like to see harsher penalties and enforcement on an institutional basis and an end to second chances, while others would prefer more leniency as well as authorization to deal with the issue informally. Respondents’ attitudes towards their institutional policy and procedures will be discussed under Research Question 4.

***Research question 4.*** *What are typical faculty beliefs about their institutions’ policies surrounding student academic dishonesty?*

*Typical attitude 1.* Most respondents (61.2%) indicated that they learned about their institutions’ policy through discussion with colleagues. In questions regarding their response to academic dishonesty, for both minor and major infractions, more than 35% of

respondents indicated that they seek advice before acting. The following comments exemplify this type of approach: “My inclination would be to give a grade of F; however, the University has been known to take such matters into its own hands, and I would therefore seek the advice of my colleagues before acting” and “I believe that it is common sense to discuss the issue with colleague” (Comments Q. 20, 2013). These representative comments and the responses to these questions indicate that colleagues play a major role in shaping faculty attitudes towards academic dishonesty and institutional policy. Therefore, Typical Attitude 1 towards institutional policy is that individual faculty member’s attitudes towards their institutional policy are informed and shaped by discussion with colleagues. How does this reconcile with the results of Question 28, in which nearly 30% of respondents indicated that they did not know about their colleagues’ attitudes towards academic dishonesty (and the comments that indicated that faculty members believe that their colleagues’ response is variable) and further noted that the issue is rarely discussed? Given the somewhat contentious nature of the topic, it could be surmised that academic dishonesty is an issue only discussed with close and trusted colleagues and is not part of a broad conversation.

*Typical attitude 2.* Another issue is the apparent lack of departmental or institutional orientation. According to comments, many faculty members do not explore their institutional policy until required to do so. This requirement may be either administratively driven (e.g., a faculty member receives an email reminder of requirements) or student-driven (e.g., a faculty member encounters a student’s academic dishonesty). Nevertheless, approximately 90% of faculty members rate themselves familiar with (42.4%), or knowledgeable about (47.3%), their institution’s policy. So,

Typical Attitude 2 is that respondents generally feel confident that they are well informed about their respective institutions' academic dishonesty policy.

*Typical attitude 3.* The third typical faculty attitude is that their institution's academic honesty policy is fair and equitable, though not necessarily effective because of problems implementing it. Another repeated theme here is that inconsistent application of policy and time-consuming procedures exacerbate the problem of academic dishonesty.

*Typical attitude 4.* Response to minor cases of academic dishonesty could not be typified. However, for major cases of dishonesty, 69% selected "follow my institution's policy exactly." Therefore, Typical Attitude 4 towards institutional academic dishonesty policy is that for cases of major academic dishonesty, faculty members tend to follow policy exactly.

*Typical attitude 5.* It would seem that always responding to academic dishonesty could or should be a typical attitude because respondents are generally adamant that they never ignore this kind of dishonesty; nevertheless, by their own account, many don't necessarily do anything about student AD unless they are able to meet a high standard of proof. Also, they do not necessarily follow the institution's academic integrity policy when they perceive it to be more efficient or equitable not to do so. The survey results are somewhat contradictory on this subject. On one hand, less than 2% of respondents reported ignoring minor dishonesty and 0% reported ignoring major dishonesty. However, the respondents' estimates of suspected academic dishonesty in their classrooms were in general significantly higher than their reported level of response. Also, in response to the question, "If you have ever ignored a case of academic dishonesty, why did you choose to do so?", 41.1% of respondents indicated that they had never ignored it. However, that

means 58.9% of respondents had ignored academic dishonesty at some point. In those cases, the most common reason given (48.3%) was “evidence is not conclusive.” Finally, comments throughout the survey indicated a significant minority who are disillusioned by the process and refuse to participate: “With a whole cohort of offenders (dramatic-sounding, I know) it’s impossible and impractical to be constantly looking for academic dishonesty. The truth is it’s a tiresome practice and makes me an angry marker, and nobody wants that (I usually share this with the students before they hand in their assignments to deter them)” (Comments Q. 26, 2013). Also reflected in the comments throughout this survey, many faculty members are overwhelmed by the time and energy involved in dealing with academic dishonesty. One commentator suggested the institution should “provide staff assistance to professors to help find all the papers that were plagiarized in a paper (I often find the first few, but it takes time to find them all, print off the appropriate parts of each paper and then write the report after meeting with the student)” (Comments, Q.30, 2013). Another said “I would hire more people to process cases so that it doesn’t take 2-3 months for the whole business to be over with. Maybe it’s not such a bad thing to let plagiarists stew a little while, but it sure doesn’t seem like due process” (Comments, Q. 30, 2013). Respondents were also distressed by the involvement of lawyers in academic dishonesty cases and did not believe that acting as ‘classroom mabuse of the appeal system by students who bring in actual lawyers. If they’re going to turn it into some sort of huge legal system, I’m not going to play along with that game” (Comments, Q. 30, 2013). Therefore, Typical Attitude 5 is that due to the bureaucratic and quasi-legal nature of academic dishonesty proceedings, faculty members will tend to ignore suspected minor cases of academic dishonesty. Further, they will not initiate

proceedings in major cases of suspected academic dishonesty unless the action is egregious or they believe they have conclusive evidence that makes the incident impossible to ignore. Alternatively, most faculty members will deal with issues of academic dishonesty outside the auspices of institutional policy.

*Typical attitude 6.* This attitude is concerned with the responsibility for implementing the policy and procedure. Throughout the study, respondents are adamant that they are unable to deal with academic dishonesty on their own. Most respondents are united in their desire to dispense with the current norm whereby faculty members are responsible for policing academic dishonesty themselves. Therefore, typical attitude 6 is that faculty members want to have more support from their administration in dealing with academic dishonesty, and they want their institutions to conduct academic dishonesty proceedings in a more timely manner.

***Research question 5.*** *Is there a relationship between institutional policy and faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty?*

Given the previous discussion of faculty reliance on colleagues when navigating cases of academic dishonesty and the characterization of academic integrity policies as fair and equitable but not effective, there does not seem to be any positive formative connection between institutional policy and faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty. However, ineffective or inconsistently administered policies appear to have left many faculty members with a sense of futility when it comes to dealing with academic dishonesty. The following two comments exemplify the sense of resignation that permeates much of this study: “I know what is SUPPOSED [*sic*] to happen, however, that is often not consistent with what does” (Comment Q.7, 2013); and “I have become

disillusioned. I consider academic honesty to be extremely important but I do not that feel that the same can be said for my institution as a whole: hence, I am tempted to give up on the issue. Tilting at windmills requires time and energy. As I do not have a surplus of either during term, what I do have is best invested in the honest students” (Comment Q.27, 2013). Therefore, rather than institutional policy positively shaping faculty attitudes to respond to the issue, it appears that institutional procedures are discouraging faculty members from following the policies that are in place. The procedures do so by being unclear and open to variance in interpretation, by putting the onus to police academic dishonesty solely on faculty members (or being perceived to do so), and by being overly legalistic.

### **Relationship to Previous Research**

#### **Faculty attitudes.**

*Dealing with academic dishonesty.* Previous research on faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty indicates that many faculty members are reluctant to discuss the issue or deal with violations. Faculty members generally prefer to deal with instances of student cheating on their own without administrative intervention due to time constraints and fears of lack of institutional support (Jendrek, 1989; Keith-Spiegel, Tabachnick, et al., 1998; McCabe, 1993; Thomas & de Bruin, 2012). These previous findings are consistent with the faculty attitudes expressed in this study.

#### **Culture of cheating / Increasing academic dishonesty.**

*Increasing rates of cheating?* Fully 53.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that academic dishonesty is now more prevalent at their institution than in the past. Similarly, respondents’ comments confirm that most believe that students are more



inclined to cheat now than in the past. As discussed above, the reasons given for this change vary, as they do in the literature. The work of Bowers (1964); McCabe and Bowers (1994); McCabe and Trevino (1996); McCabe, Trevino and Butterfield (2001a); Diekhoff et al. (1996); and Vandehey et al. (2007) found self-reported cheating rates of between 50% and 75% over a students' academic career. Nevertheless, whether or not the rates of student cheating are increasing is a matter of some debate. Passow et al. (2006) acknowledge an apparent increase in self-reported academic dishonesty but maintain that "Academic dishonesty (cheating) has been prevalent on college campuses for decades" (p. 643). Davis, Drinan and Bertram Gallant (2009) assert that the problem is not whether or not student cheating is increasing—they believe that there has always been a certain "acceptable" level of corruption—but rather that "the view of the [cheating] behaviors seem to have changed from being 'morally reprehensible' to 'morally disagreeable' or even acceptable . . . we may be tipping towards an unacceptable level of corruption" (pp. 65-66). It follows that if students don't view a particular act as wrong, they will have no compunction about doing it repeatedly. As one respondent observes, "cheating is not stigmatized among students . . . it seems to be viewed as just another way to get through the work" (Comment, Q. 15, 2013). Callahan (2004) posits that there is a societal shift towards the acceptance of cheating fuelled by economic factors. In contrast, Carr (2011) and Bauerlein (2008) argue that young people actually perceive information differently than do previous generations, due to the effects of the Internet, social media, and other communication technologies.

***The role of technology.*** Many respondents in this survey assert that technology and ease of information sharing has a role to play in modern cheating. A demand for

institutional access to Turnitin is common, as is a lament about the “cut and paste” generation. This commentary on the influence of technology is echoed in the literature. For example, “There’s so many more ways of cheating than there were before, there are more opportunities for it. . . . Cutting and pasting from the Internet, that’s very common. Also very common is paying other people to do your work, particular for elective courses in university where it’s not central to your field of study” (Hammer, 2010). The central thesis in Carr (2011) is that not only is the Internet and information overload changing the way we process information, it is also lessening our ability to analyze and evaluate information in any depth. What may be a more serious issue is that the “instant reward” and highly visual nature of most technological entertainment leaves many students disinclined to read or engage in other conventional forms of study (Bauerlein, 2008, p. 137; Cote & Allahar, 2007). This concept would resonate for the respondent who comments:

When given a topic to research students immediately go to Wikipedia and in a recent course I made a study of the flow of essays: many followed the same topical organization of the Wikipedia article. They don’t even know they’re doing it. To get around it I’ve had to assign topics that fall outside the mainstream—and how does that help ‘round’ out their education, when the canonical authors and topics should be engaged with critically, but have to be left unfinished [*sic*] in some ways because students lack critical engagement which may result in academic dishonesty to varying degrees. It’s frustrating, it’s all around us, and it’s affecting how I teach my courses... not in a good way. (Comments, Q.12, 2013)

***Societal factors.*** Economic, social, and organizational realities combine to impinge on an institution's abilities to live up to idealistic views of integrity. Unfortunately, it is difficult to promote academic integrity as an organizational priority, or to promote it to students, if the organization is compelled, or chooses, to talk about integrity while emphasizing other concerns—such as financial issues. Bok (as cited in Thomas and de Bruin, 2012, np) notes that students are unlikely to follow “espoused principles of academic integrity if they perceive that the institution compromises its own moral principles in order to ... sign a lucrative research contract, or earn a profit from Internet courses ... [U]ndergraduates often learn more from the example of those in positions of authority than they do from lectures in the classroom”. An example of faculty members' concern about these issues comes from Professor Clifford Orwin: “It's also society that prescribes, through underfunding, that our teaching be wholesale, not retail. I didn't ask to teach a class of 500 this year, and my department (which cares very much about teaching, thank you) didn't ask to offer one. It had no choice, and I drew the short straw” (Orwin, 2009, np). Orwin's frustration is echoed in this study:

Cut down the stupid size of the largest undergraduate classes and get a more person[al] contact. Give more relevance, and credit, to teaching rather than just insisting on research excellence. Provide more teacher training for professors and ensure that (1) is it relevant for the courses taught—mentoring and adpation [*sic*] issues, and that all profs take it.” Comments Q. 30, 2013)

A class of 500, or more, is unlikely to result in a peak educational experience for a faculty member or the students. It is however, much more likely to result in the grim daily reality

described by Davies et al. (2009): “faculty and students allow cheating to continue in their classrooms and corrupt the teaching and learning process” (p. 66).

The focus on results, rather than the process of learning, which leads students to value only the diploma and not the rich learning experience it is supposed to represent is well documented in the literature. Blackmore and Sachs (2003) lament this phenomenon as the “performativity and managerialism” of education, while Stoll, Fink, and Earl (2003) identify it as the “confusion [of] structure with purpose, measurement with accomplishment, means with ends, compliance with commitment and teaching with learning” (p.18). Many faculty members in this study reveal a despair of education as “Horace’s Compromise, that is, working toward a façade of orderly purposefulness, exchanging minima in pursuit of the least hassle for everyone” (Mulford, Silins, & Leithwood, 2004, p. 20). In such a context—where “only extraordinary education is concerned with learning; most are concerned with achievement”—it is not difficult to understand why many students are concerned only about getting the best possible grade and see many courses as artificial barriers to their progress (French, as cited in Anderman & Murdock, 2007).

The pressure on students to get a degree and high grades (resulting in many students’ subsequent devaluing of getting an education—rather than a qualification) is cited as a key societal factor in fostering cheating (Davis et al., 2009, pp. 82-83; Callahan, 2004, pp. 217-218). This view is echoed in this study. When confronted with the question, “What are the most significant factors contributing to academic dishonesty at your institution?” a typical response is that “High standards and competition among students for limited resources is coupled with a prevalence of weak/disinterested students who

view education/their degree as a commodity to be bought with tuition as opposed a life experience that needs to be earned.” This echoes Cote and Allahar’s (2007) examination of the Canadian higher education system. Although they don’t specify cheating, they bemoan a reduction in standards (fueled by grade inflation) that has produced a generation with a large percentage of “disengaged” students who “obsess more about the outcome of courses (grades) than about learning” (p.50). In other words, partially engaged and disengaged students tend to be motivated more by the promise of high grades rather than the love of learning, and they see their university courses as stepping stones to something in the future. It is reasonable to assume that these disengaged students are alienated from the academic culture of their institution and would therefore have little reluctance to cheat. The final comment in this section epitomizes the clash between the economic imperative of many students (and society as a whole) and the ideals of learning that led many faculty members into academia. It comes from a despairing faculty member responding to Question 30 about three institutional changes to produce a remedy to academic dishonesty.

Under the current dire financial situation of our institution and being so dependent on every single tuition dollar to ensure the institution’s very survival, and knowing we consistently accept students (future teachers) with low GPAs who acknowledge their difficulty/disdain with writing (for example), I can’t even begin to think of three wishes... why does learning have to be “consumed” and “easy”? Why is it that becoming a ‘real’ academic is once you get tenure, and “then you can do what you want to do” (without worrying, or worrying less, or facing fewer consequences)? Why is it so difficulty [*sic*] to talk about questions of learning and teaching, for ourselves and for others? (Comment Q.30, 2013)

*Students who are underprepared for university-level academic work.* A common theme in the survey is unprepared or underprepared students, including the many non-native speakers of English unable to function linguistically in the academic classroom.

*Unprepared students.* As discussed, numerous respondents in this study believe that students who are simply unprepared for university level work tend to cheat because they either do not know how, or do not care, to do otherwise. One respondent's desired institutional changes included "creating an atmosphere in the institution that is less focused on grades and more on learning objectives . . . . Improved high school curriculum so students enter our university with significantly improved literacy, writing, and research skills. . . ." (Comment, Q. 30, 2013). This view of students as unprepared is supported by the literature. In *Ivory Tower Blues*, Cote and Allahar (2007) paint a bleak picture of higher education in Canada. They argue that

Canadian universities could handle these [increasing] numbers if students were better prepared by their high school training, in the skills they bring with them and their willingness to work at their studies. However, there are serious problems in motivation and ability among a sizable proportion of students sent to universities from Canadian high schools. As a result of grade inflation, increasing numbers of students with inadequate learning skills do not feel they need to improve, primarily because they were told for years in high school that they were good or excellent students, when in fact many were not (p. 39).

To reiterate the seriousness of this issue, the Canadian Council on Learning (2009, p. 63) reported that 20% of students graduating from postsecondary education in 2006 scored below a level 3 (basic literacy) on the International Adult Life Skills Survey. In the

US, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (2006) reported that 40% of students entering postsecondary education require remedial training as they undertake their studies, and that 84% of faculty members surveyed found incoming students ill-prepared for university-level work (B1, B9). In *The Basement of the Ivory Tower* (2008), Professor X argues convincingly that “The idea that a university education is for everyone is a destructive myth” (np).

*Non-native speakers of English.* As noted in the literature review, the idea that international students are more likely to cheat is a contentious issue. However, a strong theme emerges in this study suggesting that respondents believe that international students tend to cheat more simply because they are unable to function effectively in English. Two quotations represent this viewpoint. In each, the respondent makes note of changes to the institution that could remedy academy dishonesty. “Stop recruiting foreign students who lack English language skills,” the first advises. The second respondent is even more explicit (capitalization and spelling is exactly reproduced from the original):

Better screening of international chinese students to ensure they enter with sufficiently solid english language skills to succeed in classes. Virtually 100% of the academic dishonesty cases in my dept and in my faculty involve international chinese students . . . . when they attend the hearings, it is almost always the case that they can barely communicate in english, to the point that you worry about the process being fair if they can't understand the questions you are asking in the hearings. (Comment Q.30, 2013)

This issue of international—particularly Chinese—students’ (lack of) preparation and ability to succeed in a North American tertiary education milieu is the subject of a

series of articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. The opinions expressed about international students are very similar to the comments in this study. Chinese students applying to US universities are suspected of engaging in widespread “application fraud” by having agents write applications, including essays, and submitting fraudulent transcripts and language test scores. Many Chinese students also have great difficulty adapting to a North American style of learning. An official of the University of Delaware discusses some of the issues facing the university due to the huge increase in Chinese students: “Confronting plagiarism is near the top of the list. . . . one student memorized four Wikipedia entries so he could regurgitate whichever one seemed most appropriate. . . . American concepts of intellectual property don’t translate readily to students from a country where individualism is anathema.” Nevertheless, University of Delaware officials have not experienced a huge increase in academic dishonesty cases in their language program, “as instructors prefer to handle questions of plagiarism in the classroom” (Bartlett and Fisher, 2011, November 03, np).

The struggles of international students to adapt to North American educational culture have also been documented in Canada: “The disproportionate number of international students accused of plagiarism or cheating on exams is raising red flags in university administrations and legal aid offices” (Bradshaw & Balujah, 2011, np).

The issue of unprepared and linguistically challenged students is a crucial one. In 2010, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* published an interview with “the Shadow Scholar,” who claimed to have written tens of thousands of assignments and essays at all levels from undergraduate to PhD. He claims that his typical customers include those unable to do the work and those who struggle with English: “Students who come to



American universities from other countries find that their efforts to learn a new language are confounded not only by cultural difficulties but also by the pressures of grading. . . . My service provides a particularly quick way to “master” English” (Barkat, 2010, np).

*Students who do not understand policy.* A comment consistent throughout this study was that a great deal of plagiarism is the result of students not understanding the rules about plagiarism and citation or the importance of adhering to these scholarly norms (Buranen, 1999; Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2006a; Evans & Youmans, 2000; Park, 2003).

**Quality and orientation of academic dishonesty policy.** This study explored faculty attitudes towards the quality and orientation of their respective institutions’ academic dishonesty policies. No other research was discovered that approached the issue in this way. However, the finding that faculty members often rely on the opinions and advice of their colleagues parallels findings in the literature that suggest students are strongly influenced by perceptions of their peers’ behavior regarding academic dishonesty, often cheating because they believe that “everyone is doing it” (Bloodgood, Turnley & Mudrack, 2008; Callahan, 2004; Jurdi et al., 2011; McCabe, 2001; McCabe & Trevino, 1996).

**Policy evaluation checklist.** No literature on a policy evaluation matrix being applied to institutional academic integrity policies was found. However, the International Center for Academic Integrity recently developed the Academic Integrity Rating System, an evaluation tool to allow institutions to assess their academic integrity policies and procedures (ICAI, 2012). The only other rating of academic integrity policies in the literature is Neufeld and Dianda’s (2007) review of academic integrity policies in Ontario,

which examined the definitions of, penalties for, and reactions to academic dishonesty. This study found—as did Neufeld and Dianda—that there is a great deal of variability in the way that different institutions approach the prevention and remedy of academic dishonesty. The present study extends that finding to maintain that there are variable approaches to academic dishonesty within different faculties and departments at the same institution.

In conclusion, the results of this study are consistent with the literature while offering some new insights. The next section will provide recommendations for educators based on the previous discussion.

### **Recommendations for Educators**

#### **Students who are underprepared for university level work.**

##### ***K-12 reform.***

*Literacy.* This study indicates that faculty perceive that students lack preparation and academic ability and that there are significant numbers of students who are graduating from Canadian high schools and universities with inadequate literacy skills (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009). Given this situation, it seems obvious that K-12 curricula cross Canada need to be reformed with a view to emphasizing mastery of basic literacy skills. I am not advocating here for a centrally imposed, high-stakes testing regime similar to No Child Left Behind, as these kinds of large-scale “reforms” imposed from without are prone to failure (Bishop & Mulford, 1999; Blackmore & Sachs, 2007; Shavelson, 2007). Rather, I advocate a local response crafted to meet local needs. As a recent review of literacy efforts in the UK concludes, “There was no one way of ‘getting it right.’”

Approaches varied from school to school and depended on the needs of pupils and the skills, knowledge and experience of staff” (OfSTED, 2013, p. 38).

*Assessment.* Numerous respondents to this study indicated that students valued grades highly and that learning seemed to be secondary or lower on a list of student priorities. A variety of literature supports the idea that a focus on high-stakes testing—with its emphasis on memorization—defeats the purpose for which it is intended and even causes corruption and cheating (Shulman, 2007). Also, being taught to memorize and regurgitate information for a test is a pointless exercise given the easy availability of information in modern society. That is why a multiplicity of low-stakes assessments designed to promote learning is necessary to replace the current model (Shavelson, 2007; Shulman, 2007). Is it any wonder that professors bemoan the lack of critical thinking skills in undergraduates and that students apparently don’t perceive the real value of learning, when so many students in the K-12 system spend their entire school career focused on tests, grades, and the task of pleasing the teacher?

*Ethics.* Most students’ attitudes and behaviors towards academic dishonesty are formed well before they leave the K-12 system. Therefore, it is imperative not only that the K-12 system actually begin (or resume) the teaching of ethical behaviour, but that institutions model such behavior and treat academic dishonesty seriously (Anderman & Murdock, 2007; Davis et al., 2009; McCabe, Trevino & Butterfield, 2012). Even if these steps are taken, cheating will still be problem if K-12 learning is focused solely on the passive learning of information. The 21st century requires that students have the ability to use knowledge: “There’s no competitive advantage today in knowing more than the person next to you. The world doesn’t care what you know. What the world cares about is

what you can do with what you know”(Wagner, as cited in Swallow, 2012, np). The ability to learn, re-learn, evaluate, and use information is crucial (Stoll, Fink, & Earl, 2003).

***Reform of international student recruitment.*** Again, based on the results of this study and findings in the literature, it appears that there is a massive problem with students who lack basic proficiency in English being admitted to university study. Exacerbating this issue are cultural differences around the notions of cheating and plagiarism. In order to remedy this situation, it is necessary for tertiary institutions to review both the ways in which they recruit international students and the ways in which they attempt to help students to reach the requisite level of language and ameliorate linguistic deficiencies. Rather than focusing solely on language training or meeting a certain test score, Canadian educational institutions should consider creating an international student foundation year designed to acclimate students to the new mode and manner of education while immersing them in meaningful language experiences. Several UK universities already offer such programs: in Bath, Lancaster, Leicester, and Edinburgh, for example. While some institutions in this study do offer specialized support for international students (e.g., UBC’s Jumpstart program), none offer a full foundation year.

### **Higher Education Reforms**

***A mandatory foundation year.*** Based on the results of this study and on the literature discussed in the K-12 reform section, it would seem logical for a first-year foundation program to become more common at Canadian institutions. The literature is clear that students must learn how to be students and that they must take time to do so

(e.g., Levin, 2003, 2006; Martin, 1994; McGowan, 2005a, 2005b; Park, 2003). Others (such as McInnes, 2001, p. 106) indicate that first year is when all new students are at their most vulnerable in a variety of spheres and that institutional guidance in the form of a foundation year is of great value. Foundation year or first year is not just about study skill and aptitudes. Brown and Adam (2009) assert that a good foundation program must be integrated, taking into account students' personal lives as well as studies (p. 2). Of the institutions surveyed here, only the University of Manitoba's University 1 program allows students to take a variety of courses while they learn about the expectations and demands of the university, choose a major, and become part of the institution (University of Manitoba, 2013). This model seems eminently more sensible than having high school students choose a course of study with potentially limited information about what that course of study entails and how it translates into life (i.e., a job after university). In addition, a foundation program would give underprepared students the opportunity to ameliorate any deficits in reading and writing before entering their discipline.

***Re-thinking technical and vocational education and training (TVET).*** It could reasonably be asked why there is any mention of technical and vocational education in this study. Simply put, students who lack the aptitude and skills for academic, university-level work may be better served by pursuing technical or vocational education. Similarly, academically oriented students can be engaged by a real-world component that illustrates the role of their learning more broadly, rather than view the degree as an obstacle to overcome.

Christenson Hughes (2013) recently explored the notion that higher education in Canada is ready for a paradigm shift; to survive and thrive universities need to move “not

necessarily from what the stated purpose of a university education has been, but from how it has been experienced by many students” (np). Part of such a shift could be the way in which the education system as a whole is viewed and experienced.

Rather than focusing on separate systems, 21st-century education needs to be better coordinated: “The public education system is still organized around separate K-to-12 [*sic*] systems, community college systems and university systems, but the student is really engaged in a “K-to-work” journey. Can we not better co-ordinate the primary, secondary and tertiary education systems, putting the emphasis on what it will take for students to succeed in the changing workplace? (Lynch, 2013, np). This lack of co-ordination and appropriate counseling exacts a terrible toll on young people, their parents, and ultimately, society. We have a severe shortage of skilled tradespeople in Canada (Curry, 2013). Yet, “the average starting age of an apprentice is 27. . . . Vast numbers of registered apprentices have prior post-secondary experience of some kind and have turned to the trades later in life, having been poorly advised on their initial career choices” (Robinson, 2013, np). That means that countless Canadian youth are wasting years and significant financial investments pursuing higher education that does not meet their needs.

Such a shift may have already started, as some universities and technical institutions are now collaborating to offer joint programs. For example, Centennial College, Ontario, offers joint programs with Ryerson University and the University of Toronto in a variety of fields (e.g., environmental science and technology, nursing, journalism, and new media studies). The stated aim of these collaborations is to offer students the “practical and technical strengths of a college diploma and the theoretical foundations of a four-year bachelor degree” (Centennial College, 2013). Furthermore,

Ontario Polytechnic institutions are lobbying the government to be able to award three-year degrees with an applied focus. As one student noted of an innovative entrepreneurship program combining the practicality of a community college diploma with the theory of an undergraduate degree, “I was just really inspired by my courses” (Bourette, 2013).

In short, since university enrollment has increased by more than 50% in the last decade and now more than 25% of young people are enrolled in higher education (AUCC, 2012), it behooves educators at all levels to discard the prejudice of technical and vocational education as lesser in value than the academy and examine this rush to higher education. Have the number of students who need and desire a university education really increased that much? Or have students been convinced by parents, teachers, counsellors, and others that only a university education has true value for learners seeking jobs in the knowledge economy? I do not have the answers to these questions, but they are issues that demand exploration. For many people, working with their hands offers a unique satisfaction not afforded by white-collar jobs in the knowledge economy (Crawford, 2009). Better integration and streaming of students into TVET and combined programs has the potential to increase student motivation and satisfaction, better suiting students to a purely academic stream, and ensuring that they attend less crowded institutions of higher education. This could contribute to reducing the seeming tide of academic dishonesty now occurring on campus.

**Engaging students and faculty in a culture of academic honesty.**

*Working against degree inflation and credentialism.* According to these survey results, many respondents perceive that students view their degree requirements as a

gatekeeper or a hurdle. The student strategy is to dispense with the requirements, get the piece of paper, and get on with “real life.” This is a sentiment repeated throughout this study and in the literature (e.g., Allard & Parashar, 2012; Bartlett & Fischer, 2011; Crawford, 2009). Part of this attitude may stem from students’ view of a degree as a prerequisite to gaining suitable employment. Numerous commentators have noted the trend of degree inflation: “labor statistics show that employers are requiring that an increasing number of jobs be filled by college degree holders. Jobs traditionally taken by high school graduates are going to college students/graduates and employers are advertising that college students/graduates are “preferred” for those jobs” (Johnson, 2006). Government interference may also cause problems. For example, in 2012, the Ontario government changed the one-year Bachelor of Education degree to a two-year program. This decision was a political one with no relationship to learning; it was intended to reduce the number of graduating teachers because unemployment of newly minted teachers was rising to unacceptable levels (Editorial, 2012). Such manipulation does not make the educator’s job of promoting academic integrity an easy one. What then can be done? If educators want students to adhere to prescribed constructs of academic integrity, then instruction and assessment needs to be geared to delivering meaningful outcomes: i.e., what students perceive as meaningful or to what employers want. This many seem counterintuitive to the higher goals of transformative learning that initially draw many to become educators; however, based on these survey results and the literature, educators and employers actually (in general ) want the same things.

**Teaching students what employers want.** Educators generally want students who want to learn: students who can analyze, evaluate, and communicate; who express ideas



clearly; and who demonstrate both academic integrity and some level of commitment to their learning. The professors in this study indicated that they want students who are willing to honestly do the work and thus, derive benefit from doing so. Employers want similar skills and traits. They desire honest employees with integrity, good communication skills and critical and creative thinking skills. They also desire people with the following characteristics: reliability, punctuality, and a positive attitude (AAUC, 2013; Chester, 2013; Conference Board of Canada, 1996; Fisher, 2013). In fact, more than 90% of employers who responded to the recent survey by the American Association of Universities and Colleges (2013), indicated that they believed students' communication and problem-solving abilities were more important than their major. Given this overlap in desires, it would be advantageous for higher education to reduce the emphasis on grades and assessment and increase the emphasis on ethics and critical and creative thinking. Therefore, all courses should focus on thinking (comprehension, analysis, problem-solving) and ways of clearly expressing that thinking (but not necessarily in a traditional essay). Shulman (2005) asserts that in the signature pedagogies of a discipline (e.g. the way that professions like medicine or law prepare students for professional practice), "novices are instructed in critical aspects of the three fundamental dimensions of professional work—to think, to perform and to act with integrity" (p. 52). He argues that other disciplines should emulate this approach so that, for example, students of history learn how to critically examine, analyze, and evaluate historical arguments and artifacts like a historian. Furthermore, he advocates a Socratic, questioning approach in order to create a level of learner- and instructor-anxiety that drives engagement and learning. Given the free flow of information now available, disciplinary-based training on how to

interpret and evaluate information and construct arguments based on it would be a most beneficial undertaking for students.

**Clarity and consistency in dealing with academic dishonesty.**

*Policies conveyed in clear language.* Despite the requirement of most universities that instructors include a notice about academic dishonesty policy and procedures in their course syllabi, there is a consistent theme in this study and the literature (e.g. Bertram Gallant, 2008; Christensen Hughes & McCabe, 2006a, 2006b; Davis et al., 2009; Yeo, 2007) that students do not fully understand or share the same ideas about what constitutes academic dishonesty—particularly around plagiarism and collaboration. Neufeld and Dianda (2007) found, as many respondents in this study commented, that the legalistic nature of many academic dishonesty policies renders them obscure to students. Most universities in this survey have student academic honesty sites, but the explication of policy in clear language is not universal, as it needs to be. Therefore, it is crucial that institutionally, the concepts, policies and procedures around academic dishonesty are clearly defined and conveyed to students in language they can easily understand.

*Orientation to academic dishonesty policies.* Another contentious issue is the role of intent in academic dishonesty. Determining intent is difficult, which is probably why most policies considered here exclude it as a defense against a charge of academic dishonesty. However, if students truly do struggle to comprehend the rules, is this fair? In order to ensure clarity and consistency in the institutional approach to academic dishonesty (and student understanding of these academic dishonesty policies) it is necessary to orient students to academic honesty requirements. This should not be done during initial orientation when students are settling in to a new environment and possibly

suffering information overload. Each faculty within an institution should require its students to attend a seminar on academic honesty, as Concordia does in some departments. Also, it should be made clear to students during such sessions that in cases of major acts of dishonesty (e.g., copying an entire essay or buying a term paper on the Internet, cheating on an examination) intent to cheat will be assumed. Further, while new faculty members and new students must be trained, in order to immerse them in institutional norms, ongoing workshops should be offered for continuing faculty and periodically required for continuing students.

*Academic dishonesty versus poor scholarship.* Similarly, in the interest of clarity and consistency, there needs to be a clear delineation between poor scholarship and plagiarism. Plagiarism, as defined in this study, is copying someone else's ideas and writings, in whole or in part, and passing them off as your own. However, an individual missing quotation marks or with poor paraphrasing --or copying some portion of a website or book to bolster a paper they are trying to write-- strikes me as a fundamentally different activity from cutting and pasting an entire paper from the Internet, submitting a paper written by a friend, paying someone to write an essay, or buying a term paper from a website. Having the same catch-all term applied to activities which vary so greatly in premeditation, intent, and seriousness contributes to student confusion about what constitutes academic dishonesty and to faculty frustration about how to deal with it. Therefore, I suggest that plagiarism be redefined to refer to copying elements of a work, while copying either the majority or the entirety of an essay or website should be considered academic fraud. Likewise, buying or contracting out the writing or production of any work for academic credit should be considered academic fraud. Further, the

concept of minor plagiarism should be “de-criminalized” and (rather than a traditional punishment) such transgressions should be dealt with by requiring the student involved to take a mandatory course on academic honesty and/or mandatory remedial work in the writing support centre. The key to making such a system work is a tracking system that ensures that students complete the assigned course and remedial work and ensures that individual students are not repeating the same “minor” offenses. In my view, plagiarism is a serious offense, but, as commonly defined, it is one that can often be committed inadvertently. In contrast, academic fraud is a premeditated, deliberate attempt to gain academic credit for someone else’s work.

In a re-definition of plagiarism, the concept of self-plagiarism—i.e., a student should be sanctioned for submitting the same paper for one or more courses without permission— should be re-considered. If the student has done the work why should he or she not be able to revise it to meet similar requirements? Professors and other academics present and submit different iterations of their work all the time. This study will, the author envisions, become a journal article and then a book. Does this differ all that much from the undergraduate whose professors allow such generic topics that the same essay will satisfy both?

Finally, no discussion of clarity regarding academic dishonesty would be complete without a word about the American Psychological Association (APA). It is my firm belief that the proliferation of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* as the arbiter of formatting correctness (at least in the social sciences) contributes to the student difficulty with citation discussed in this study. The APA manual is pedantic, counterintuitive, and far too detailed for the needs of the average

undergraduate. Any publication of style that upon revision needs to have an addendum issued to correct the mistakes and then is subsequently reprinted (APA, 2009) is obviously unsuitable for undergraduates. There is also growing awareness that it is hard to account for Web 2.0 content within the confines of APA style (Graya, Thompson, Clerehan, Sheard & Hamilton, 2008). Finally, unless a student is going to graduate school, they will rarely, if ever, use APA after they graduate. Thus, I suspect that for many undergraduates, it appears that APA is just another hoop through which format-crazed professors make them jump. The easiest way to avoid this issue is for each faculty of the university to issue a style guide or to make simplified formatting and citation part of a mandatory course on how to prepare an academic paper. While, alternatively, the proliferation of software like Ref Works (that aids in citation and formatting) may eventually render this a moot point, the emphasis on formatting simply serves to teach students that the content doesn't matter as much as meticulous formatting.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

**Policy.** Based on the literature and the results of this study, it is reasonable to conclude that the quality and appropriateness of policies and procedures can be irrelevant; they will not work if they are not applied consistently throughout an institution. Therefore, further research needs to be done on how to reduce faculty unwillingness to report academic dishonesty. By this, I mean doing a large-scale inquiry seeking faculty input on how the barriers against faculty response to academic dishonesty could be reduced. This research needs to include an expansive look at policy and procedures across North America and beyond to identify best practices that are both practical and functional.

**Student attitudes.** Similarly, an exploration of students' opinions of what and how they want to learn is necessary. It is past time that Canadian institutions of higher learning sought—and acted upon—students' input in the area of academic honesty and dishonesty. Students engaged in meaningful learning, gaining skills and experiences they want and need, would be much less prone to cheating than students enduring a meaningless (to them) course to satisfy a requirement (Hunt, 2002).

**Honour codes and integrity pledges.** Given that a wide range of literature indicates that honor codes and modified honor codes reduce the occurrence of academic dishonesty, it is surprising that they are not used at all in Canada (Bertram Gallant & Drinan, 2008). A pilot project should be conducted using a modified honor code, as research is needed to evaluate the efficacy of modified honor codes in the Canadian context. Interestingly, research has indicated that signing a pledge before completing a task results in significantly lower rates of cheating (Ariely, 2012). Mazar (as cited in Habib, 2012) “found attesting to the truthfulness of information before a form is filled out tends to activate people’s ‘moral sense’” (np). Again, a large-scale study of how (or if) this measure works in the Canadian university context could be very valuable—particularly in the case of international students.

**Engaging students and faculty in a culture of academic honesty.**

***Pragmatism versus integrity.*** McCabe, Butterfield & Trevino (2012) advocate using honor codes and establishing a culture of integrity as the primary methods for successfully preventing student academic dishonesty. However, establishing effective honor codes and changing organizational culture are difficult and time-consuming tasks—

which they concede. The approach ventured by Davis et al. (2009) may be more practical to implement. They maintain that for most students, and their instructors, cheating, and dealing with cheating, is not an ethical matter, but a pragmatic one. Simply put, students cheat when the potential benefits of doing so outweigh the potential consequences of getting caught. Therefore, anything that reduces the consequences (e.g., a tendency of instructors to ignore the behaviour, lenient penalties, or a student culture that does not stigmatize cheating) makes cheating more attractive, while anything that increases the consequences (stigma against cheating, consistent application of penalties) reduces the attractiveness of cheating. Similarly for instructors, factors that make reporting unattractive (e.g., excessive paperwork, extra meetings, lack of institutional trust or support, or potential for litigation) reduces the impulse to report academic dishonesty. Therefore, it behooves Canadian institutions to explore ways to make cheating less rewarding for students while making it more rewarding—or at least less punitive—for instructors to handle. Some suggested ways of doing this are rewarding students for “whistle-blowing” or for having a clean disciplinary record. Another is having institutions rank their courses for integrity (Davis et al., 2009). The idea of whistle-blowing seems untenable and counterintuitive. Rewarding students for having a clean record might also seem off-putting to those who consider that students have an obligation to act honestly in any case. However, insurance companies routinely reward drivers for driving safely, which is manifestly in the individual’s own self-interest, and employers routinely offer employees incentives to be more productive and to reduce absenteeism. Therefore, providing meaningful recognition to students who are honest could help reduce cheating. Similarly, a university’s courses could be ranked by integrity quotient on a self-assessment

basis (as some accreditation bodies do) and the instructors could have a specified time period to meet a minimum standard. This type of initiative would have to form part of a serious commitment to academic integrity and could be used by an institution trying to market themselves as a highly ethical institution with ethical students. Again, this is a long-term solution that needs a high level of institutional support. Such an initiative could start with the institution announcing that it is going to do a thorough evaluation of its approach to academic honesty, including a review of courses and classroom practice. It would be interesting to study if the mere statement of this intent had any effect on student and faculty attitudes and behaviours among faculty members and students.

Two additional ways of reducing cheating, which need to be explored, are the reformation of the transcript and the recording of meaningful extracurricular contributions or achievements. While some institutions already facilitate the formation of extracurricular records, the efficacy of this movement has not been well explored. Secondly, Carey (2013) argues that transcripts are not effective for students or employers, as the record of grades is now virtually meaningless as an indicator of the knowledge and skills that students actually possess. Therefore, studies need to examine how universities and colleges can make the transcript a true reflection of learning. Students might be less inclined to cheat if they knew that they would have to explicate or demonstrate their learning on an e-portfolio that formed part of their transcript.

#### **Underprepared students.**

*Foreign students.* More research needs to be conducted about how and why foreign students choose Canada for their studies and how institutions here can help such students adapt to the North American model of education and succeed. It is crucial that



more research on the effective integration of international students take place now, as more and more Canadian universities are targeting increased international student numbers to offset budget cuts (AUCC, 2012, p. 2).

***Literacy.*** Universities need to be at the forefront of improving literacy in Canada. If students are graduating without the ability to achieve at a high level on an international test of literacy, then it behooves Canadian tertiary education institutions to find ways to improve the situation. In the US, the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) has entered into a “compact” with businesses to ensure that graduates have the requisite skills to flourish in their careers (AACU, 2013). The efficacy of such agreements should be evaluated with the idea of developing similar partnerships between universities and K-12 institutions.

### **Conclusion**

This study explored faculty attitudes towards student academic dishonesty at 17 selected Canadian universities. It found that while institutional policies at the selected institutions generally ranked highly on a policy evaluation framework based on the work of Whitley & Keith-Spiegel (2002)—and were highly regarded in principle by the faculty members surveyed—a majority of faculty members did not believe the policies are implemented effectively. Similarly, the faculty members surveyed displayed a variety of attitudes towards student academic dishonesty, with the following points of consensus: academic dishonesty is a problem at their respective institutions and it is a problem that is increasing; and unprepared students and foreign students who struggle to communicate effectively in English are the main contributors to this problem. Additionally, academic dishonesty is not uniformly or consistently dealt with at their respective institutions and

faculty members are generally tired of having to bear the brunt of dealing with it. Overall, the faculty members in this study projected an attitude of frustration with the topic. This study underlined the point that academic dishonesty is a hugely complex issue with a variety of contributing factors and with general disagreement about the ways in which it can best be managed. The final part of this study suggested that the issue of academic dishonesty could be approached by reform in the K-12 sector, by more integration of education from K-12 to tertiary education and that re-envisioning technical and vocational education should be as part of a potential remedy for academic dishonesty. It concluded with recommendations for future research in a variety of areas related to making dishonesty less attractive to students and less difficult for faculty members to deal with.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Survey Form**

**NOTE: The appearance, not the content, of the Web Based Survey differs from the script below.**

#### **FACULTY ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDENT ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

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##### **Page 1 Welcome**

Dear Participant:

I am a full-time Ed.D. candidate in the Department of Graduate Division of Educational Research at the University of Calgary and am currently conducting research under the supervision of Dr. J. Kent Donlevy. This research will inform my doctoral dissertation on "An Exploration of Student Academic Dishonesty in Selected Canadian Universities" This letter is an invitation for you to participate.

##### **Study Overview**

The purpose of my study is to explore institutional policies around student academic dishonesty and to determine if there is a relationship between the nature of institutional policy and faculty members' attitudes towards student academic dishonesty at their respective institution.

Information will be gathered in two ways 1. through a review of academic integrity documents from your institution and its website and 2. through this online survey.

##### **Your Involvement**

Participation in the research is entirely voluntary. This online survey is being administered by SurveyGizmo(c) an American software company. As such, your responses are subject to U.S. laws, including the USA Patriot Act. The risks associated with participation are minimal, however, and similar to those associated with many e-mail programs, such as Hotmail(c) and social utilities spaces, such as Facebook(c) and MySpace(c). Should you decide to participate simply click " Next" to start the survey. You are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

Please be assured that your responses will be held in the strictest confidence and you will remain anonymous. Your computer's IP address will NOT be recorded. Your responses will appear in the published dissertation only as part of the data set. If your comments are quoted in the dissertation your affiliation and subject taught will not be mentioned. All the information that you provide will be held in strict confidence, available to only me and my

supervisor, Dr. J. Kent Donlevy, in accordance with the University of Calgary, Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Guidelines. All information will be held until 2017 and will be subsequently destroyed. Any paper records used during the study will be shredded. Electronic data will be deleted and erased from the hard drive of my computer and that of my supervisor. The survey results will be deleted from the website.

**Contact Information**

Please feel free to ask questions about this study. You may contact me email: pmacleod@ucalgary.ca or Dr. J. Kent Donlevy at 403-220-2973; email: donlevy@ucalgary.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance by the University of Calgary, Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB). The final decision to participate, however, is yours. If you have any questions or issues that are not related to the specifics of the research, you may also contact the Senior Ethics Resource Officer, Research Services Office University of Calgary at 403-220-3782; email rburrows@ucalgary.ca Your interest and assistance with this research are much appreciated.  
Sincerely,

Paul MacLeod  
Doctoral Candidate

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**Informed Consent**

**Study Title:** An Exploration of Student Academic Dishonesty in Selected Canadian Universities

**Investigator:** Paul MacLeod

**Supervisor:** Dr. J. Kent Donlevy

This form is part of the informed consent process. If you require any further information or have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me: pmacleod@ucalgary.ca This study has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance from the University of Calgary, Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to explore the student academic dishonesty policies of eighteen Canadian universities and to compare the results of this policy review to the results of a survey of faculty members' attitudes toward student academic dishonesty and

their own institutions' academic dishonesty policy. You are invited to participate because you are teaching undergraduates at one of the eighteen Canadian universities selected for this study.

### **What will I be asked to do?**

I am inviting you to share your perspective on student academic dishonesty and your institution's academic dishonesty policy. You will be asked to complete a survey consisting of approximately 25 questions (depending on your responses). This survey will take approximately 15 minutes. You have the opportunity to add additional comments to every question.

### **What type of personal information will be collected?**

No personal identifying information will be collected in this study, and all participants will remain anonymous. Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a survey form including your institutional affiliation, your subject and the number of years that you have worked as an educator. The information which you provide will only be reported as part of a data set and will not link any individuals to a specific institution.

### **Are there any benefits or risks to participating?**

Through participation you will have the opportunity to reflect on your beliefs about student academic dishonesty and your institution's policy in this regard. No monetary benefits will be provided. Participation is voluntary and the survey may be completed at any time convenient to the participant. This online survey is being administered by SurveyGizmo(c), an American software company. As such, your responses are subject to U.S. laws, including the USA Patriot Act. The risks associated with participation are minimal, however, and similar to those associated with many e-mail programs, such as Hotmail(c) and social utilities spaces, such as Facebook(c) and MySpace(c).

**What happens to the information I provide?** The data which will be generated from your survey will be used to inform my doctoral dissertation and may be used in related scholarly articles, publications and conference presentations. Your participation is voluntary, anonymous and confidential. You are free to discontinue your participation anytime during this study. If you choose to discontinue your participation in this study, your information will still be used. As your participation is completely anonymous, I will be unable to identify and remove individual respondents. The survey results will be used for data analysis purposes only. No one except the researcher and his supervisor will be privy to the digital files. Digital data files will be kept in the researcher's computer and in his supervisor's. Only the researcher and his supervisor will have access to them. Data generated from the survey will be destroyed in five years (in 2017). All related data files on the researcher's and supervisor's computers will also be erased at the same time. The contents of the website will also be deleted.



## **Written Consent**

There will be no signatures or paper consent forms as this will be a fully online survey. "By submitting the completed or partially-completed survey, you are indicating your consent as a participant in this research study".

## **Contacts**

**If you require any additional information or clarification please contact**

Mr. Paul MacLeod, Faculty of Education Email: [pmacleod@ucalgary.ca](mailto:pmacleod@ucalgary.ca)

Dr. J. Kent Donlevy, Faculty of Education; T. 403-220-2973; Email: [donlevy@ucalgary.ca](mailto:donlevy@ucalgary.ca) Mailing address, University of Calgary 2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, AB T2N1Z4

Mr. Russell Burrows, Senior Ethics Resource Officer : T. 403-220-3782 Email: [rburrows@ucalgary.ca](mailto:rburrows@ucalgary.ca) Mailing address University of Calgary 3512-33 Street NW Calgary, AB, T2L 1Y7

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## **Affiliation and Teaching Responsibilities Page 2**

### 1) Please select your institution\*

- ☐ Acadia University
- ☐ Concordia University
- ☐ Dalhousie University
- ☐ McGill University
- ☐ McMaster University
- ☐ Memorial University of Newfoundland
- ☐ Mount Allison University
- ☐ University of Alberta
- ☐ University of British Columbia
- ☐ University of Calgary
- ☐ University of Manitoba
- ☐ University of New Brunswick
- ☐ University of Prince Edward Island

- ☐ University of Regina
- ☐ University of Saskatchewan
- ☐ University of Toronto
- ☐ University of Victoria
- ☐ University of Western Ontario
- ☐ University of Winnipeg

2) I teach\*

- ☐ Undergraduate students only
- ☐ Primarily undergraduate students
- ☐ Equal numbers undergraduate students and graduate students
- ☐ Primarily graduate students
- ☐ Graduate students only
- ☐ Other

3) Please indicate the primary area in which you teach.

- ☐ Arts
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Communication/Journalism
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Interdisciplinary
- ☐ Medicine/ Health
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Sciences
- ☐ Social sciences
- ☐ Other

4) Please indicate your years of teaching experience

- ☐ Less than 5 years
- ☐ 5-9 years
- ☐ 10-14 years
- ☐ 15-19 years

☐ 20 or more years

5) Please indicate your academic rank

☐ professor emeritus

☐ full professor

☐ associate professor

☐ assistant professor

☐ lecturer/ instructor

☐ graduate teaching assistant

☐ other

---

**Page 3 Institutional Student Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Please check ALL that apply

6) I learned about my institution's academic dishonesty policy through

☐ institutional orientation

☐ departmental orientation

☐ academic catalogue

☐ website

☐ discussing with colleagues

☐ Other (please specify below)

*Comments*

7) I \_\_\_\_\_ my institution's academic dishonesty policies and procedures.

☐ am knowledgeable about

☐ am familiar with

☐ have minimal knowledge of

☐ other (Please specify)

*Comments*

Please check ALL that apply

8) The following stakeholders were involved in drafting or revising my institutions'

academic dishonesty policy.

- ☐ administration
- ☐ faculty members
- ☐ graduate students
- ☐ undergraduate students
- ☐ other (Please specify)
- ☐ don't know

*Comments*

9) My institution demonstrates an ethos of concern that all its members act ethically.

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

*Comments*

Please check ALL that apply.

10) My institution's academic dishonesty policy

- ☐ is fair and equitable
- ☐ is effective
- ☐ is too punitive
- ☐ is too lenient
- ☐ needs revision (please specify below)
- ☐ don't know

*Comments*

11) My institution's academic dishonesty policy is primarily concerned with

- ☐ preventing academic dishonesty by punishing offenders
- ☐ preventing academic dishonesty by helping students to act ethically

☐ a combination of the above

☐ don't know

☐ other (Please specify)

*Comments*

12) Academic dishonesty is a problem at my institution.

☐ Strongly Disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Not sure

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

*Comments*

13) Academic dishonesty is more prevalent at my institution now than in the past.

☐ Strongly Disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Not sure

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly Agree

*Comments*

Please check ALL that apply

14) Institutional factors such as \_\_\_\_\_ are contributing to the problem of academic dishonesty at my institution.

☐ class sizes that are too large

☐ accepting students who are not qualified

☐ valuing research over teaching

☐ penalties for cheating are not severe enough

☐ policies for dealing with academic dishonesty are too time consuming to follow

☐ institutional factors are not contributing to an increase in academic dishonesty

☐ Other (Please specify)

*Comments*

15) What are the most significant factors contributing to academic dishonesty at your institution?

16) My institution is taking well considered action to address the issues surrounding academic dishonesty

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Not applicable

*Comments*

---

**My attitude towards student academic dishonesty**

Please check ALL that apply.

17) Upholding high standards of academic honesty is part of my duties to

- ☐ my institution
- ☐ my students
- ☐ my profession
- ☐ myself
- ☐ other (Please specify)
- ☐ I do not consider upholding high standards of academic honesty to be part of my duties

*Comments*

Please check ALL that apply.

18) I provide my students with information about our institution's academic dishonesty policy by

- ☐ giving written instructions at the beginning of the semester (e.g. as part of a course outline or syllabus)
- ☐ regularly discussing the issue in class
- ☐ referring students to the university website
- ☐ referring students to the university calendar or student handbook
- ☐ teaching students the academic conventions around citation and use of sources
- ☐ reviewing the concepts of plagiarism, authorized collaboration, cheating, etcetera before quizzes, exams or other assessments
- ☐ I do not discuss the academic dishonesty policy with students
- ☐ Other (Please Specify)

Please check ALL that apply.

19) I use the following safeguards to deter academic dishonesty in my classes:

- ☐ using the Internet or software to detect plagiarism
- ☐ changing quizzes, exams and assignments frequently
- ☐ giving different versions of quizzes or exams within the same class
- ☐ closely monitoring students taking quizzes or exams
- ☐ requiring projects or essays to be submitted in stages
- ☐ requiring students to sign an academic integrity pledge on all assessed work
- ☐ Other (Please Specify)
- ☐ I do not use safeguards

*Comments*

Please check ALL that apply.

20) If faced with a clear, but minor case of academic dishonesty e.g., student copied a couple of phrases or sentences in an assignment or cheated on a quiz, I would

- ☐ seek advice before acting
- ☐ follow my institution's policy exactly
- ☐ refer case to Dean, Chair or other
- ☐ deal with the matter informally

- ☐ give a reduced grade
- ☐ give a grade of F
- ☐ ignore it
- ☐ Other (please specify)

*Comments*

Please check ALL that apply.

21) If faced with a clear, major case of academic dishonesty e.g., student copied most of a paper or assignment or clearly cheated on an exam I would

- ☐ seek advice before acting
- ☐ follow my institution's policy exactly
- ☐ refer case to Dean, Chair, or other authority
- ☐ deal with the matter informally
- ☐ give a reduced grade
- ☐ give a grade of F
- ☐ ignore it
- ☐ Other (please specify)

*Comments*

22) If you have referred a case of academic dishonesty to your Dean, Chair or anyone else at your institution, please rate your satisfaction with how the case was handled

- ☐ Very unsatisfied
- ☐ Unsatisfied
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Very Satisfied

Comments



23) In the last two years how often do you believe the following behaviors have occurred in your classes

	<b>Never</b>	<b>1-4 times</b>	<b>5-7 times</b>	<b>8-10 times</b>	<b>More than ten times</b>
Serious Plagiarism (copying of a major part or whole of a piece of work)	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Minor plagiarism (copying a few phrases or lines)	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Using unauthorized materials OR getting or giving unauthorized assistance on a quiz or test	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Using unauthorized materials OR getting or giving unauthorized assistance on a on a mid-term or	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

final examination					
Unauthorized collaboration on an assignment or project	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Other (please specify below)	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

*Comments*

24) How many times have you responded to an incident of academic dishonesty in the last two years?

- ( ) Never
- ( ) 1-4 times
- ( ) 5-7 times
- ( ) 8-10 times
- ( ) More than 10 times

Please check ALL that apply.

25) Typically I respond to academic dishonesty by

- [ ] following my institution's policy exactly
- [ ] dealing with the matter informally
- [ ] assigning a lower grade
- [ ] ignoring it
- [ ] Other (please specify below)

*Comments:*

Please select ALL that apply

26) If you have ever ignored a case of academic dishonesty, why did you chose to do so?

- ☐ evidence was not conclusive
- ☐ takes too much time to document and report
- ☐ administration does not support faculty in academic dishonesty cases
- ☐ offending students are treated leniently
- ☐ possible legal or professional repercussions
- ☐ not applicable
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

*Comments*

27) My attitude towards academic dishonesty has changed during my teaching career

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ N/A

*If you answered yes, please specify reasons*

---

### **My colleagues' attitudes towards student academic dishonesty**

Please check ALL that apply.

28) My colleagues demonstrate their commitment to high standards of academic honesty by

- ☐ following the institution's academic dishonesty policy
- ☐ teaching their students about the academic conventions around sources and citation
- ☐ teaching their students about our institution's values and expectations
- ☐ demonstrating a high degree of commitment to teaching and student achievement
- ☐ don't know
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ My colleagues do NOT demonstrate commitment to high standards of academic honesty

*Comments:*

29) At my institution, academic dishonesty is dealt with in a consistent manner

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

*Comments:*

### **3 Wishes**

*30) If you could change any three aspects of your institution to remedy academic dishonesty, what would they be?*

*Additional Comments?*

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### **Thank You!**

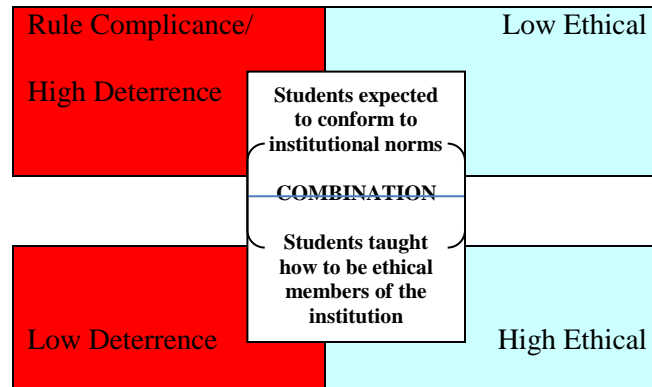
Thank you for completing my survey. Your responses are very important to my research. Results will NOT be automatically emailed to you as no record has been kept of your email address or other details. If you would like to receive a copy of these results please email: pmacleod@ucalgary.ca All such enquiries will be kept confidential.

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## Appendix B

### Academic Integrity Policy Orientation Matrix

**Figure 1: Policy evaluation matrix**



(Adapted from Bertram Gallant, 2008)

## Appendix C

### Effective Academic Integrity Policy Checklist

(adapted from Whitley & Keith Spiegel, 2001)

**Institution:**      **Total Score: / = %**      **Grade:**

<b>1. Policy Development:</b> Stakeholders involved in policy development?			<b>Yes/No /NA</b>	<b>Score /3</b>
__ Students	__ Faculty	__ Administrators		
<b>Notes:</b>				
<b>2. Statement of Policy:</b> Policy begins with				<b>Score /3</b>
__ a clear statement of institutional values	__ a clear statement of importance of academic integrity to the institution	__ an unequivocal statement condemning academic dishonesty		
<b>Notes:</b>				
<b>3. Definition/ explication of Prohibited Behavior</b> Policy clearly defines what actions constitute academic dishonesty/ misconduct				<b>Score /1</b>
<b>Notes:</b>				
<b>4. Specification of Responsibilities</b> Policy clearly states the specific responsibilities of students, faculty and administrators regarding academic honesty				<b>Score 6/ 6 (as below)</b>
<b>4a. Students</b>				<b>Score / 2</b>
4a.1. Clear statement indicating that students are obligated to avoid acts of academic dishonesty				
4a.2. Statement that as members of a community of scholars, students have a duty to act with integrity and promote academic integrity				
<b>Notes:</b>				
<b>4b. Faculty</b>				<b>Score / 2</b>
4b.1. Policy clearly outlines faculty members' duty to promote academic integrity and discourage academic dishonesty.				
4b.2. Policy clearly articulates guidelines for instructors to follow when confronted with academic dishonesty/ misconduct.				
<b>Notes:</b>				
<b>4c. Administrators</b>				<b>Score / 2</b>
4c.1. Policy clearly outlines administrators' duty to promote academic integrity and discourage academic dishonesty				
4c.2. Policy clearly articulates guidelines for administrators to follow when confronted with academic dishonesty/ misconduct.				
<b>Notes:</b>				

<b>5. Specification of Resolution Procedures:</b>		<b>Score /3</b>
<b>5a. Informal resolution</b>		
5a.1. Are faculty members permitted to informally resolve suspected cases of academic dishonesty without formal administrative involvement?		
5a.2. If yes, are the procedures and limitations of this resolution method clearly stated?		
5a.3. If yes, are the maximum penalties allowed limited to a grade of F for the course or a zero for the assignment involved? (Harsher punishments should only be imposed after formal proceedings).		
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>5 b. Formal resolution</b>		<b>Score /4</b>
5b.1. Are the policy and procedures for formal academic dishonesty proceedings clearly outlined?		
5b.2. Does the policy indicate the students' rights if they are formally accused of an act of academic dishonesty?		
5b.3. Is there a committee established to adjudicate suspected cases of academic dishonesty?		
5b.3.1. If yes, above, does it have a student representative?		
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>6. Specification of Penalties</b>		<b>Score / 5</b>
6.1. Does the policy clearly state the possible sanctions for acts of academic dishonesty?		
6.2. Does the policy provide a range of possible sanctions from which the disciplinary body can choose depending on the severity of the transgression?		
6.3. Does the policy provide for assigning a grade of XF, or other transcription notation, for failing a course due to an act of academic dishonesty?		
6.3.1. If yes, is there a mechanism for a student to have an academic dishonesty notation removed from his or her transcript?		
6.3.2. If yes, above, are the conditions for this change clearly stated?		

<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>7. Remediation</b>		<b>Score</b>  <b>/3</b>
7.1. Is there a remedial course on academic integrity for violators of the institution’s academic integrity policy?		
7.2 Are there additional provisions for teaching violators of the institution’s academic integrity policy how to maintain requisite academic standards?		
7.2.1. If yes, above, are there provisions in place to insure completion of remedial measures?		
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>8. Record Keeping</b>		<b>Score / 5</b>
8.1. Does the policy provide for the maintenance of records on students who have admitted to or been found guilty of academic dishonesty?		
8.2. Is there a mechanism for recording students’ academic dishonesty in cases of informal resolution-- if allowed?		
8.3. Is there a mechanism in place for tracking repeat offenders?		
8.4. Is there a clearly delineated procedure for dealing with repeat offenders?		
8.5. Does the institution publish an annual report detailing violations of the academic integrity policy and how these cases were resolved?		
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>9. Specification of Prevention Measures</b>		<b>Score / 2</b>
9.1.Does the policy indicate the measures faculty members should use to encourage academic integrity and reduce academic dishonesty?		
9.2.Are there established guidelines regarding issues such as good examination invigilation practices, prohibition of mobile telephones in the testing room, multiple versions of exams; having all classes writing common examinations at the same time?		
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>10. Implementation of the Academic Integrity Policy</b>		<b>Score / 4</b>
10.1. Does the policy provide for an academic integrity officer or program administrator to “oversee the implementation of the policy, monitor its effectiveness, recommend changes, keep records, and direct academic integrity program activities”		
10.2. Is there an academic integrity committee to support the efforts of the academic integrity officer or program administrator?		



10.3. If an AI committee exists is it active?		
10.4. Is the AI committee comprised of representatives of all campus stakeholders i.e., students, faculty administrators?		
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>11. Faculty Training</b>		<b>Score / 2</b>
11.1. Are faculty provided with training on “how to prevent, control, and confront academic dishonesty”?		
11.2. Is assistance provided for faculty members confronting cases of suspected dishonesty? E.g., information on policy, how to correctly follow procedures, expectations, methods for gathering evidence, and strategies for presenting evidence in hearings” (p.333).		
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>12. Student Assistance/ Orientation</b>		<b>Score / 7</b>
12.1. Are new students given an orientation on the academic integrity policy and the norms and expectations of the institution?		
12.2. Are international or immigrant students oriented into the norms and values of the institution that might conflict with those of their home culture?		
12.3. Are there online orientation and training programs to help students avoid academic dishonesty?		
12.4. Does the institution offer courses or other experiences after initial orientation to foster a culture of academic integrity? Is there a consistent effort to engage students and help them to integrate into the culture of their institution?		
12.5. Is assistance available to students in need of help?		
12.5.1. Is such assistance accessible? I.e., are services operating at times convenient for most students? See Above		
12.5.2. Are these services well publicized? See Above		
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>Policy Orientation:</b>		
<b>Overall comments:</b>		

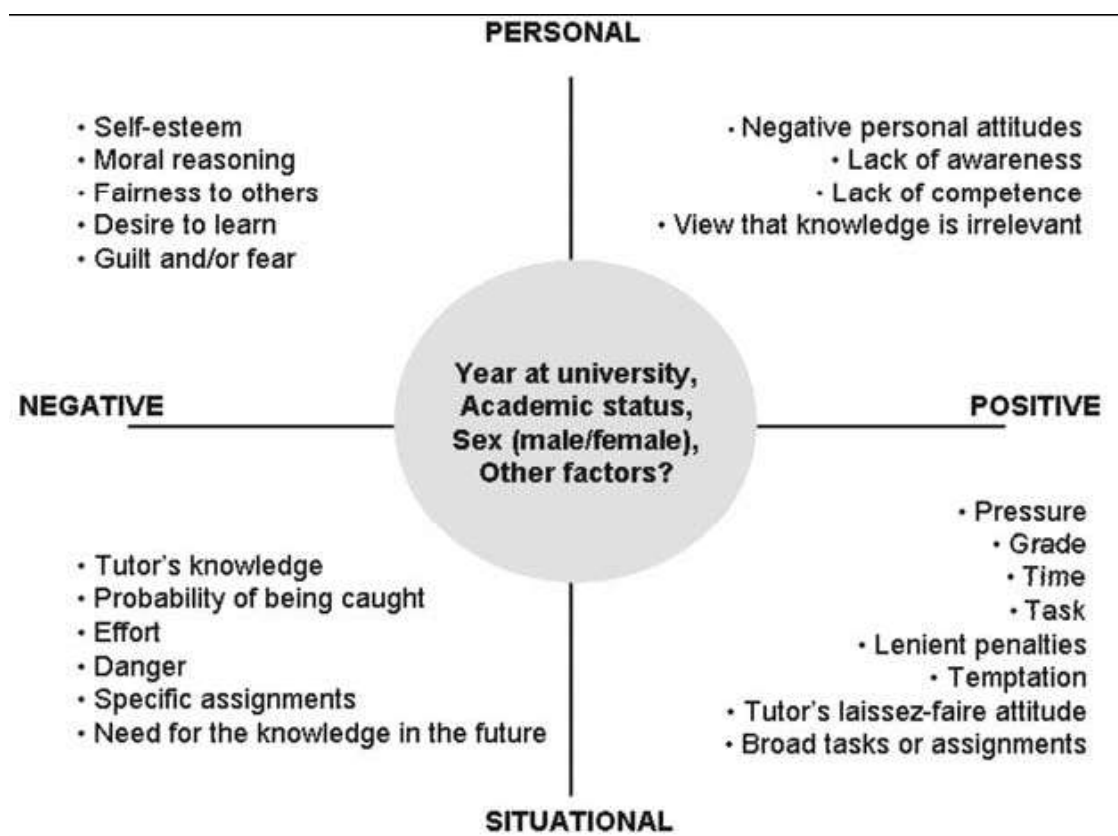
## Appendix D

### Qualitative Sampling Frame

<b>Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)</b> <b>Selected Member universities by Province</b> <b>(Adapted from AUCC membership list)</b>	
<b>Alberta</b> University of Alberta Athabasca University University of Calgary Concordia University College of Alberta The King's University College University of Lethbridge  <b>British Columbia</b> The University of British Columbia Emily Carr University of Art and Design University of the Fraser Valley Kwantlen Polytechnic University University of Northern British Columbia Simon Fraser University Thompson Rivers University Vancouver Island University University of Victoria  <b>Manitoba</b> Brandon University University of Manitoba University of Winnipeg  <b>New Brunswick</b> Mount Allison University University of New Brunswick St. Thomas University  <b>Newfoundland and Labrador</b> Memorial University of Newfoundland <b>Nova Scotia</b> Acadia University Cape Breton University Dalhousie University University of King's College Mount Saint Vincent University St. Francis Xavier University Saint Mary's University	<b>Ontario</b> Algoma University Brock University Carleton University University of Guelph Lakehead University Laurentian University of Sudbury McMaster University Nipissing University University of Ottawa Queen's University Ryerson University University of Sudbury University of Toronto Trent University Victoria University University of Waterloo The University of Western Ontario Wilfrid Laurier University University of Windsor York University  <b>Prince Edward Island</b> University of Prince Edward Island  <b>Quebec</b> Bishop's University Concordia University McGill University

## Appendix E

Model of the Impact of Personality and Situational Factors on the Decision to Cheat  
(Szabo and Underwood, 2004)



## Appendix F

### Academic Dishonesty Policy Summary Preliminary Website Review 18 selected Canadian Universities

	Dedicated AD/ AI webpage	Online academic honesty tutorial	Emphasis on importance of AI to the university	Clearly defines AI	Clearly defines AD	Clearly states students' obligations	Clearly outlines AD procedures	Int	Deterrence	Combo
U of Alberta	<a href="http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/index.cfm">http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/TIE/index.cfm</a>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			X
University of Calgary	<a href="http://www.ucalgary.ca/honesty/">http://www.ucalgary.ca/honesty/</a>	No	No	No	No	No	No		X	
University of British Columbia	<a href="http://www.library.ubc.ca/clc/airc.html">http://www.library.ubc.ca/clc/airc.html</a>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			X
University of Victoria	<a href="http://www.ltc.uvic.ca/services/programs/resources/integrity.php">http://www.ltc.uvic.ca/services/programs/resources/integrity.php</a>	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		X	
University of Manitoba	<a href="http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy/">http://www.umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy/</a>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			X
University of Winnipeg	<a href="http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/cms-files/system-action?file=pdfs/calendar/sectionviiacademicregulationsandpolicies.pdf">http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/cms-files/system-action?file=pdfs/calendar/sectionviiacademicregulationsandpolicies.pdf</a>	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		X	
University of New Brunswick	<a href="http://eservices.unb.ca/calendar/undergraduate/display.cgi?tables=regulations&amp;id=10">http://eservices.unb.ca/calendar/undergraduate/display.cgi?tables=regulations&amp;id=10</a>	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		X	
Mount Allison University	<a href="http://www.mta.ca/calendar/ch06.html#_6.13">http://www.mta.ca/calendar/ch06.html#_6.13</a> <a href="http://www.mta.ca/faculty/arts/canadian_studies/programme/integrity/index.html">http://www.mta.ca/faculty/arts/canadian_studies/programme/integrity/index.html</a>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			X
Memorial University Newfoundland	<a href="http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=REGS-0748#REGS-0791">http://www.mun.ca/regoff/calendar/sectionNo=REGS-0748#REGS-0791</a>	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		X	
Dalhousie University	<a href="http://academicintegrity.dal.ca/">http://academicintegrity.dal.ca/</a>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	X		
Acadia University	<a href="http://www.acadiau.ca/registrar/Current%20Calendar/Intro/acade.pdf">http://www.acadiau.ca/registrar/Current%20Calendar/Intro/acade.pdf</a>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		X	
University of Toronto	<a href="http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/">http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/</a>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	X		
University of Western Ontario	<a href="http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/academic_integrity.htm">http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/academic_integrity.htm</a>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	X		
University of Prince Edward Island	<a href="http://www.upei.ca/registrar/reg20">http://www.upei.ca/registrar/reg20</a>	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes		X	
McGill University	<a href="http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/">http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/</a>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes			X
Concordia University	<a href="http://provost.concordia.ca/academicintegrity/">http://provost.concordia.ca/academicintegrity/</a>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes			X
University of Regina	<a href="http://www.uregina.ca/presoff/vpadmin/policymanual/Academic%20Regulations/DisciplinaryRegulations.pdf">http://www.uregina.ca/presoff/vpadmin/policymanual/Academic%20Regulations/DisciplinaryRegulations.pdf</a>	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		X	
University of Saskatchewan	<a href="http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/honesty/">http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/honesty/</a> <a href="http://www.usask.ca/integrity/drupal/?q=node/4">http://www.usask.ca/integrity/drupal/?q=node/4</a>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes			X

