



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Academic integrity and mental well-being: Exploring an unexplored relationship

Canadian Symposium on Academic Integrity
As we get started, introduce yourself in the chat!

Helen Pethrick, MA; Dr. Sarah Elaine Eaton, PhD; Kristal Louise Turner, BA PGCERT
Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary

June 22-23, 2021

We invite you to reflect on the traditional territories upon which you are situated.

Visit www.native-land.ca

I would like to acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), as well as the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.



Outline

1. Introductory Activity
2. Overview: Rapid Review
3. Findings
4. Calls to Action
5. Concluding Activity
6. Q&A

Session Goals

- Open a conversation about a widely unexplored relationship between academic integrity and mental well-being in higher education;
- Present the findings of a rapid review of peer-reviewed literature (Eaton et al., 2021 – See: <https://osf.io/rycsh/>)
- Address ways that student well-being should be considering in academic integrity research and practice.



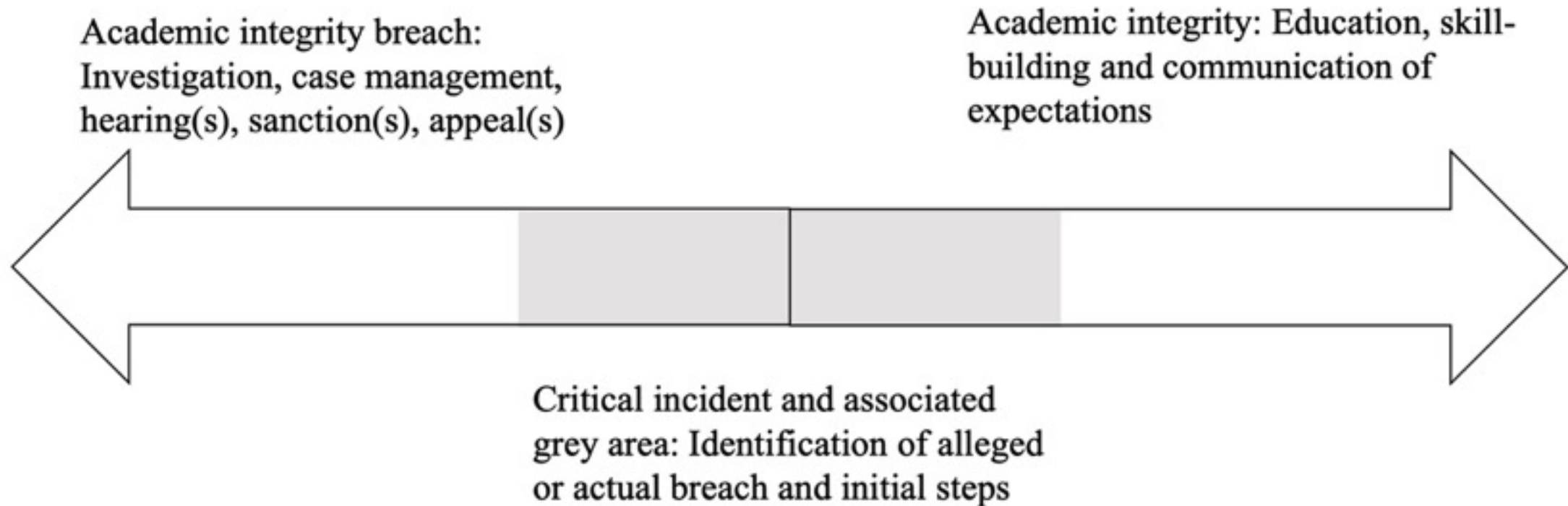
Background

- **Academic integrity:** No singular definition, but often draws on six fundamental values (ICAI, 2021).
- **Mental well-being:**
- “feelings of happiness and satisfaction with life (emotional well-being), positive individual functioning in terms of self-realization (psychological well-being), and positive societal functioning in terms of being of social value (social well-being).” (Westerhof and Keyes, p. 2009, p. 110).

Background

Academic Integrity Continuum

Eaton, Pethrick, & Turner, 2021






Overview: Rapid Review

- **Objective:** To explore the relationship between academic integrity and mental well-being among postsecondary students as evidenced in the existing literature.
- Although stress and anxiety have been identified as factors contributing to academic misconduct (Adam, 2016; McCabe, 2016), little research appears to have been conducted explicitly exploring the relationship between mental well-being and academic integrity (Authors, 2020).

Overview: Rapid Review

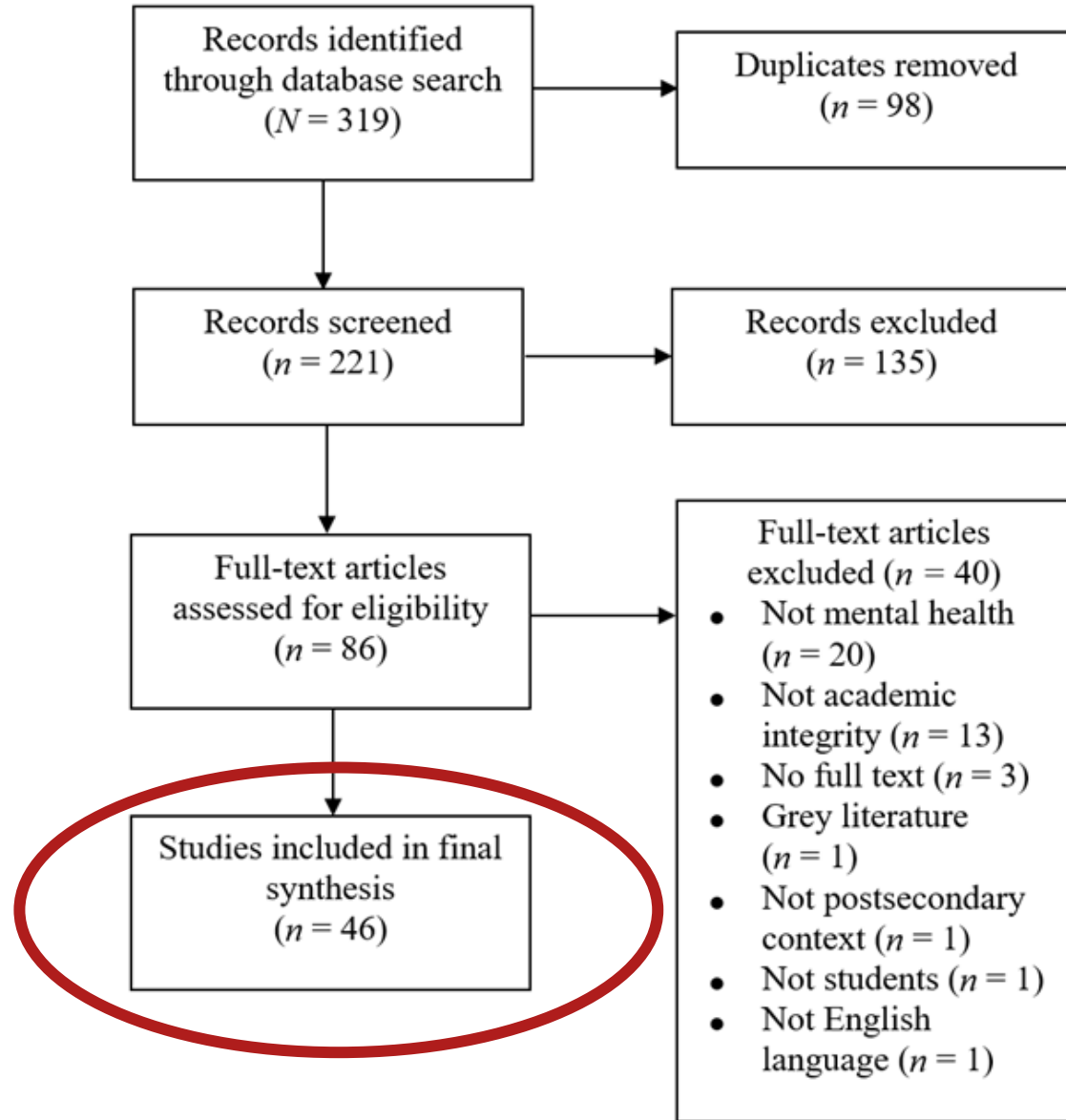
- Databases: Academic Research Complete, Education Research Complete, EMBASE, ERIC, PsycInfo; and SocINDEX.
- Inclusion Criteria:
 - (a) focused on academic integrity or academic misconduct;
 - (b) described mental health/mental distress;
 - (c) were located in the post-secondary context;
 - (d) focused on postsecondary students;
 - (e) were published in an academic source; and
 - (f) were English-language.

Overview: Rapid Review

- *academic integrity OR academic misconduct OR plagiar* OR cheat* OR academic dishonesty OR academic fraud OR contract cheat* OR academic honesty OR academic appeal*
- *AND mental health OR mental distress OR wellbeing OR wellness OR trauma OR anxiety OR depression OR stress*
- *AND postsecondary OR university OR college OR higher education*
- *AND student or undergraduate or graduate*
- *NOT infidelity* 

Findings

- Through our screening process, we found 46 relevant studies



Findings

- **Themes**

1. Negativity Bias
2. Inconsistency of Definitions and Constructs
3. Paradigmatic Tensions
4. Focus on External Stressors
5. Focus on Mental Well-Being Prior to a Critical Incident

Calls to Action

- **Provide training for student affairs professionals and administrators who work in academic integrity.**
- **Acknowledge the impact of an allegation on mental well-being.**
- **Destigmatize mental distress and the emotional impact of an academic misconduct allegation or case.**



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Thank you!

We will now take questions

helen.pethrick@ucalgary.ca

seaton@ucalgary.ca or @DrSarahEaton on Twitter

kllumsde@ucalgary.ca



References

See the full list here: <https://osf.io/rycsh/>

Adam, L. (2016). Student perspectives on plagiarism. In T. Bretag (Ed.), *Handbook of academic integrity* (pp. 519-535). Springer Singapore

Eaton, S. E., Pethrick, H., & Turner, K. L. (2021). Understanding the connection between academic integrity and mental well-being: A rapid review. (*Under review*).

Eaton, S. E., & Turner, K. L. (2020.) Exploring academic integrity and mental health during COVID-19: Rapid review. "Journal of Contemporary Education Theory & Research". 2020(4)1. pp. 35-41. <https://zenodo.org/record/4256825#.X6gXr5NKhm8>

McCabe, D. (2016). Cheating and honor: Lessons from a long-term research project. In T. Bretag (Ed.), *Handbook of Academic Integrity* (pp. 187-198). Springer Singapore.

Westerhof, G. J., & Keyes, C. L. (2010). Mental illness and mental health: The two continua model across the lifespan. *Journal of Adult Development*, 17(2), 110-119.