THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Third Edition

ICAI

International Center for Academic Integrity

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The International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) cultivates integrity in academic communities throughout the world to promote ethical institutions and societies.

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Introduction

In general, The International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) exists to promote academic integrity and ethics in schools and in society at large. To do that, ICAI offers a variety of services, including assessments, resources, and consultations. ICAI believes in the importance of promoting critical conversations about integrity. *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity* was created to facilitate these conversations and as a statement of the organization's core beliefs.

The original, 1999 edition of *The Fundamental Values* included five values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. In 2014, the sixth value was added: courage.

In 2018, the International Center for Academic Integrity became a stand-alone 501(c)(3) non-profit, and the Board of Directors determined it was time for a third edition of the Fundamental Values. This third edition continues the discussion about the six values but also provides ideas for putting these six values into practice to help build a culture of academic integrity in the classroom, at the institutional level, and beyond. As ICAI continues to expand its membership across the globe, the organization strives to find support and examples that can be used in a variety of educational cultures and ecosystems.

ICAI's goal is that this edition will serve as a practical reference to help facilitate these important conversations and support a systemic movement toward cultures of academic integrity and academic excellence at institutions both large and small.

The Values

What is Academic Integrity? Why Is It Important?
Why identify fundamental values?

Many instructors, students, staff, and administrators embrace the principles of academic integrity because they know the goals of teaching, learning, research, and service can only be accomplished in ethical environments. Despite that, scholarly institutions rarely identify and describe their commitment to the principles of integrity in positive and practical terms. Instead, they tend to address academic integrity by identifying and prohibiting behaviors that run counter to the principles of integrity. By articulating the fundamental values of academic integrity, ICAI attempts to frame academic integrity in ways that are both positive and pragmatic.

ICAI defines academic integrity as a commitment to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. By embracing these fundamental values, instructors, students, staff, and administrators create effective scholarly communities where integrity is a touchstone. Without them, the work of teachers, learners, and researchers loses value and credibility. More than merely abstract principles, the fundamental values serve to inform and improve ethical decision-making capacities and behavior. They enable academic communities to translate ideals into action.

Scholarly communities flourish when community members "live" the fundamental values. To do this, these communities must invoke them, regularly inviting staff, students, faculty, and administrators to consider and discuss the role of ethical values and their ability to inform and improve various aspects of life on and off campus. When a society's institutions are infused with integrity, they create a stronger civic culture as a whole.

Honesty

> **hon·es·ty**
> *noun*
> 1. The quality of being honest, free from fraud or deception,
>   legitimate, truthful[1]

Honesty forms the indispensable foundation of integrity and is prerequisite for full realization of trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

Honesty begins with individuals and extends out into the larger community. As students and faculty seek knowledge, they must be honest with themselves and with each other. In study halls and laboratories, in libraries, playing fields, and classrooms, cultivating and practicing honesty lays a foundation for lifelong integrity.

Institutions also must commit to being honest with students, faculty, staff, supporters, and their broader communities, for honesty at the organizational level sets the tone for the overall academic endeavor.

Established as a value, honesty allows for and encourages the development of trust. Trust accrues over time, with experience, and is built on a foundation of actions more importantly than words.

Ways to demonstrate honesty:

- Be truthful
- Give credit to the owner of the work (i.e., musician, author, artist, speaker etc.)
- Keep promises
- Provide factual evidence
- Aspire to objectivity, consider all sides and one's own potential preconceptions

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[1] merram-webster.com/dictionary/honest, accessed 15 Sept. 2020

Trust

> **trust**
> *noun*
> 1. The assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something[2]

The ability to rely on the truth of someone or something is a fundamental pillar of academic pursuit and a necessary foundation of academic work. Members of the academic community must be able to trust that work, whether student work or research, is not falsified and that standards are applied equitably to all. Only with trust can we ground new inquiries in the research of others and move forward with confidence. Trust enables students and researchers to collaborate, share information, and circulate new ideas freely, without fear.

Trust is reciprocal: being worthy of others' trust and allowing oneself to trust others go hand-in-hand.

Students promote trust by preparing work that is honest, thoughtful, and genuine. Faculty promote trust by setting clear guidelines for assignments and for evaluating student work in an equitable, timely, and forthright manner.

Trust is developed by schools that set clear and consistent academic standards, that apply their standards unfailingly and fairly, and that support honest and impartial research.

Outside the academic community, trust enables communities to value and rely on scholarly research, teaching, and degrees. Communities of trust engender cooperation by creating environments in which participants expect to treat others—and be treated—with fairness and respect.

Ways to demonstrate trust:

· Clearly state expectations and follow through

· Promote transparency in values, processes, and outcomes

· Trust others

· Give credence

· Encourage mutual understanding

· Act with genuineness

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[2] merram-webster.com/dictionary/trust, accessed 15 Sept. 2020

Fairness

Impartial treatment is an essential factor in the establishment of ethical communities because it reinforces the importance of truth, ideas, logic, and rationality. Important components of fairness include predictability, transparency, and clear, reasonable expectations.

All members of the academic community, including faculty, students, administration, and staff have a right to expect fair treatment and a duty to treat others fairly.

Faculty members are fair to students, each other, and institutions when they lead by example, communicating expectations clearly, responding to dishonesty consistently, and upholding academic integrity principles unfailingly.

Students engage in fairness by doing their own original work, acknowledging borrowed work appropriately, respecting and upholding academic integrity policies, and by maintaining the good reputation of the institution.

Administrators and staff are fair to their communities when they provide clear, useful, and just policies that help establish and nurture communities of integrity, and that treat students, faculty, staff, alumni, and institutions with respect.

Impartial, consistent, and just responses to dishonesty and integrity breaches are fundamental to educational fairness. Accurate and impartial evaluation also plays an important role in educational processes by establishing trust among faculty and students.

Ways to demonstrate fairness:

· Apply rules and policies consistently

· Engage with others equitably

· Keep an open-mind

· Be objective

· Take responsibility for your own actions

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[3] merram-webster.com/dictionary/fairness, accessed 15 Sept. 2020

Respect

Respect in academic communities is reciprocal and requires showing respect for oneself as well as others. Respect for self means tackling challenges without compromising your own values. Respect for others means valuing the diversity of opinions and appreciating the need to challenge, test, and refine ideas.

Scholarly communities succeed when there is respect for community members and for the diverse and sometimes contradictory opinions expressed. The most dynamic and productive learning environments foster active engagement, including rigorous testing, spirited debate, and lively disagreements over ideas tempered by civility and courtesy to those who voice them.

Students show respect when they value and take advantage of opportunities to gain new knowledge by taking an active role in their own education, contributing to discussions, actively listening to other points of view, and performing to the best of their ability.

Faculty show respect by taking students' ideas seriously, by recognizing them as individuals, helping them develop their ideas, providing full and honest feedback on their work, and valuing their perspectives and their goals.

Members of academic communities further show respect by acknowledging intellectual contributions of other scholars through proper identification and citation of sources. Cultivating environments in which all members show and enjoy respect is both an individual and a collective responsibility.

Ways to demonstrate respect:
- Practice active listening
- Receive feedback willingly
- Accept that others' thoughts and ideas have validity
- Show empathy
- Seek open communication
- Affirm others and accept differences
- Recognize the consequences of our words and actions on others

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[4] merram-webster.com/dictionary/respect, accessed 15 Sept. 2020

Responsibility

re·spon·si·bil·i·ty
noun
1. The quality or state of being responsible; moral, legal, or mental accountability; reliability, trustworthiness[5]

Upholding the values of integrity is simultaneously an individual duty and a shared concern. Every member of an academic community—each student, staff, faculty member, and administrator—is accountable to themselves and each other for safeguarding the integrity of its scholarship, teaching, research, and service.

Shared responsibility distributes and magnifies the power to effect change. Responsible communities can overcome apathy and inspire others to uphold the academic integrity standards of the group.

Being responsible means standing up against wrongdoing, resisting negative peer pressure, and serving as a positive example. Responsible individuals hold themselves accountable for their own actions and work to discourage and prevent misconduct by others.

Responsible faculty not only create and enforce classroom and institutional policy, but they also clearly communicate expectations around these policies. They keep their word and adhere to their own and their institution's policies.

Likewise, responsible students seek to obtain and understand information about classroom and institutional policy. They follow these policies and ask questions when they do not understand or disagree with them.

Responsible institutions and administrators work to ensure that the educational process, the institution's policies, and even its funding sources and extracurricular activities align with the institution's mission and long-range vision.

Ways to demonstrate responsibility:
- Hold yourself accountable for your actions
- Engage with others in difficult conversations, even when silence might be easier
- Know and follow institutional rules and conduct codes
- Create, understand, and respect personal boundaries
- Follow through with tasks and expectations
- Model good behavior

Courage

> **cour·age**
> *noun*
> 1. The mental or moral strength to venture, persevere,
>   and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty[6]

Courage differs from the preceding fundamental values by being more a quality or capacity of character. However, as with each of the values, courage can be practiced and developed.

Courage often is interpreted as a lack of fear. In reality, courage is the capacity to act in accordance with one's values despite fear.

Being courageous means acting in accordance with one's convictions. Like intellectual capacity, courage can only develop in environments where it is tested. Academic communities of integrity, therefore, necessarily include opportunities to make choices, learn from them, and grow. Through this iterative process, courage and the five additional values of academic integrity can develop as interwoven and mutually dependent characteristics.

Students who exhibit courage hold themselves and their fellow learners to the highest standards of academic integrity even when doing so involves risk of negative consequences, such as a bad grade, or reprisal from their peers or others.

Among faculty members, courage manifests itself as the willingness to hold themselves, students, and other faculty accountable for maintaining a culture of integrity as defined by the five additional values. Courageous faculty also hold institutions and administrators accountable for aligning policy with mission and vision and for supporting an environment that fosters integrity. The same is true for administrators.

Members of academic communities must learn to make decisions that demonstrate integrity. They also must then display the courage necessary to act on those decisions. Only by exercising courage is it possible to create communities that are responsible, respectful, trustworthy, fair, and honest and strong enough to endure regardless of the circumstances they face.

Ways to demonstrate courage:

- Be brave even when others might not
- Take a stand to address a wrongdoing and support others doing the same
- Endure discomfort for something you believe in
- Be undaunted in defending integrity
- Be willing to take risk and risk failure

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[6] merram-webster.com/dictionary/courage, accessed 15 Sept. 2020

How to Create a Culture of Academic Integrity

ICAI is an international organization that seeks to promote integrity in academic communities worldwide and through that effort promote ethical institutions and societies at large. The organization recognizes the cultural aspects of this work and pledges to collaborate and partner with academic institutions and organizations around the world to build a network of integrity allies. As part of this work, ICAI shares emerging research and trends in the field of academic integrity that can guide organizations seeking to nurture a culture of integrity.

At an institutional level, a culture of integrity exists at the roots of the organization as a foundational element. Building such a culture requires action and commitment at the top, bottom, and throughout an organization. Promoting the fundamental values of academic integrity in education requires balancing high standards of integrity with the educational mission, as well as compassion, and concern.

Three decades of attention to the processes and practices of successful academic integrity programs inform the following recommendations for programmatic development in academic communities.

Although there is no "one-size-fits-all" formula for establishing climates of integrity, taking several steps can maximize the chances for success.

Institutions should:

1. Clearly and regularly articulate how a culture of academic integrity supports achieving the institution's mission and vision.

2. Educate all members of the community about academic integrity standards so that expectations are well understood as integral components of the community culture.

3. Regularly assess the perceptions of integrity at your institution.

4. Re-envision pedagogy to include demonstrated competencies and learning outcomes so students have opportunities to practice, make mistakes, and learn from them.

5. Establish on-campus partnerships and collaborations to help faculty create positive pedagogical environments and promote integrity in the classroom.

6. Develop and publicize clear, fair, academic integrity policies, procedures, and statements that can be effectively understood, procedurally sound, and consistently implemented.

7. Promote the positive aspects of academic integrity amongst all segments of the campus community. (See our online resources for suggestions.)

8. Regularly review academic integrity policies to ensure that they are consistent, equitable and transparent, effective at their stated purpose, address changes in the field (e.g., new technology and evolving methods of misconduct), educational, and forward looking in their scope.

9. Support those who follow the policies and uphold standards.

10. Re-evaluate pedagogy institution-wide to reduce incentives for academic dishonesty.

11. Create and promote support services that encourage student success such as tutoring centers, writing labs, counseling services, accessibility services, etc.

12. Dedicate institutional resources to these goals, even when resources are scarce.

Institutions exist in different environments with different communities and different needs. As a result, the details of each institution's academic integrity programs will vary one to another. In each case, however, the relationship between policies and procedures, community standards, and day-to-day conduct should be congruent, consistent, and compatible with the institutional mission, vision, and values.

Faculty and staff can adapt these institutional strategies within individual classrooms, departments, or other academic units to drive change vertically and laterally.

Wholesale culture change is challenging and occurs slowly over time. Successful culture change requires patience and the ongoing involvement of students, faculty, staff, administration, institutions, and society at large.

Resources

The International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) offers its member institutions support and resources for developing effective academic integrity programs. ICAI maintains an updated list of resources on its website which can be found at **www.academicintegrity.org/resources**.

ICAI also provides the following:

Consulting Services: ICAI maintains a cadre of experts in academic integrity who are available to assist member organizations and institutions in assessing academic integrity and identifying strategies that can enhance the culture of integrity.

Assessment: ICAI offers several opportunities for member organizations to assess their own culture of integrity. This includes the ICAI McCabe Student Survey of Academic Integrity, a research-grade survey that can provide comparative data analysis as a benchmark for institutions.

Conferences and Webinars: ICAI hosts a variety of conferences and webinars each year dedicated to bringing together researchers and practitioners in academic integrity from organizations worldwide to share their latest work. The organization sponsors regional conferences through the ICAI Regional Consortia as well as an Annual Conference.

Talks and Workshops: From creating policies for entire schools or universities to building a learning environment that resists dishonesty, ICAI's experts are available to present custom talks and workshops both in-person and online.

Acknowledgments

The International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) cultivates integrity in academic communities throughout the world to promote ethical institutions and societies. ICAI offers assessment services, resources, and consultations to its member institutions, and facilitates critical conversations about integrity. The Center welcomes participation and involvement from all who share in that aim.

For more information about the Center, please visit our web page: **www.academicintegrity.org**

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