Chapter 31

Conclusions and Future Directions for Academic Integrity in Canada

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Abstract In the conclusion to this edited volume, we highlight key themes from the book, making reference to the particular chapters that address them. We discuss the symbolic importance of the work by situating previous work and celebrating milestones related to academic integrity in Canada. We acknowledge the limitations of the book and offer recommendations for future directions for research, practice, and policy.

We chose the title of this volume, “Academic Integrity in Canada: An Enduring and Essential Challenge” (Eaton & Christensen Hughes, eds., 2022) intentionally. Contributors from across the country have shared new perspectives on enduring problems, but do so in a way that has been uniquely and exclusively Canadian. Contributors also bring new insights on important and essential topics, such as Indigenous perspectives on academic integrity (see Lindstrom, 2022; Poitras Pratt & Gladue, 2022) that until now, have not been part of the broader discourse.

Symbolic Importance of this Volume: Situating Previous Work and Celebrating Milestones

This book began with the idea of marking the fifteenth anniversary of the seminal articles by Julia Christensen Hughes and Donald (Don) McCabe (2006a, b) and demonstrating how far Canada has come since this work was published. Despite Christensen Hughes and McCabe’s work receiving extensive media attention and even an award from the *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* for the year it was

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published (see Christensen Hughes & Eaton, 2022b), it remained, for many years, the only major study on the topic in Canada.

As research on educational integrity was flourishing in other countries, Canada lagged behind (see Eaton & Edino, 2018). Canadians working in the field of academic integrity often found themselves turning to research and guidance from other countries and attempting to apply those findings to our own context. Although transferring findings from elsewhere can be helpful to an extent, such applications are limited in many ways. Even in the widely referenced *Handbook of Academic Integrity* (Bretag, ed., 2016), a volume spanning more than 1000 pages, there was one chapter that included a focus on Canada, and even then it was done in comparison with another country (see Foeger & Zimmerman, 2016). Although there were other contributors to the handbook who were Canadian (see: Christensen Hughes & Bertram Gallant, 2016; Newton & Lang, 2016; Rogerson & Basanta, 2016), there were no chapters exclusively about Canada.

This book showcases how far Canadians have come in terms of their contributions to the field in the fifteen years since Christensen Hughes & McCabe (2006a, b) published their work. It also highlights unique aspects of the Canadian higher education context. In doing so, it demonstrates how far we have come in the five years since the internationally acclaimed *Handbook on Academic Integrity* was published (Bretag, 2016).

The Significance of Contributions in This Volume

In this volume, contributors share empirical findings (see deMontigny, 2022; Garwood, 2022; Hamilton & Wolsky, 2022; McNeill, 2022; Packalen & Rowbotham, 2022; Peters et al., 2022; Rossi, 2022), as well as conceptual and other forms of scholarly expertise and insights (see Christensen Hughes, 2022; Christensen Hughes & Eaton, 2022a, b; Crossman, 2022; Eaton & Christensen Hughes, 2022; Foxe et al., 2022; Hunter & Kier, 2022; Miron, 2022; Teymouri et al., 2022; Watson Hamilton, 2022) and perspectives from leadership and professional practice (see Kenny & Eaton, 2022; Morrison & Zachariah, 2022; Morrow, 2022; Penaluna & Ross, 2022; Thacker & McKenzie, 2022). Of particular note are the chapters that broaden understanding of academic integrity beyond the questionable behaviours of students, to include that of faculty, administrators and the history and cultures of institutions of higher learning, as well as those that extend the dialogue around the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) (see Bens, 2022; Kenny & Eaton, 2022; Hamilton & Wolsky, 2022), signalling that academic integrity inquiry can fit within SoTL when the focus is on learning and teaching.

This book builds on previous scholarship in the field, but also brings new insights on topics that have previously received limited or no treatment in the literature. For example, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first time Indigenous voices have been included in scholarly discourse on academic integrity (Lindstrom, 2022; Poitras Pratt & Gladue, 2022). Similarly, although restorative practices have been

discussed as one approach to addressing breaches of integrity, Sopcak and Hood's (2022) chapter brings new depth to the discussion. We also know that academic integrity at the K-12 level has received inadequate treatment, which Stoesz (2022) addresses in her chapter.

Brenna Clark Gray (2022) addresses questions around the ethics of educational technology, signalling that educators, policy makers and others must pay attention to the ways in which technology will continue to shape education and the ethical complexities that will no doubt bring. Eaton (2022a) presents a historical account of contract cheating in Canada going back more than half a century. These contributions are essential, given the dramatic shift to on-line learning and assessment, as well as the increasingly brazen behaviour of contract cheating companies that have flourished in Canada, becoming billion dollar businesses.

Limitations and Future Directions

As with any book, ours is not without its limitations. We recognize that although Indigenous contributors have begun an important dialogue about the need to decolonize and Indigenize academic integrity and approaches to educational ethics broadly, the voices of Indigenous scholars included in this volume are from Western Canada. We know that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples are not a singular monolithic group. We recognize the need to extend the dialogue about how to decolonize ethics and integrity in educational contexts further and engage with others from historically marginalized groups; we see the chapters in this book by Poitras Pratt and Gladue (2022) and Lindstrom (2022) as a starting point, not an end.

As contributors were in the early stages of drafting their chapters in 2020, we heard news of George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis (see Hill et al., 2020) and subsequent news stories of continued racism against Black people and other persons of colour. These occurrences are not limited to the United States, and also happen in Canada and elsewhere. During this time period, the Alberta Council on Academic Integrity (2020) released its Statement Against Racism in Matters Relating to Academic Integrity and others began advancing the dialogue about equity, diversity and inclusion as they relate specifically to academic integrity (see Boisvert et al., 2020; Eaton, 2020; Parnther, 2020); we have yet to fully address the ways in which minoritized students are overrepresented in the reporting of misconduct behaviours or sanctioned differently from White peers. These are important topics that must continue to be addressed through research, policy, practice, and advocacy.

We recognize the invaluable role that higher education professionals play in contributing to cultures of integrity and to the learning supports for students. We are delighted to have chapters that include perspectives from those working in academic integrity offices, student affairs, the library, academic writing centres, quality assurance and other non-academic units within learning institutions (see, for example, Bens, 2022; Foxe et al., 2022; Garwood, 2022; Gray, 2022; Morrow, 2022; Penaluna & Ross, 2022; Sopcak & Hood, 2022; Rossi, 2022; and Thacker & McKenzie, 2022).

We know that the voices of higher education professionals and practitioners deserve to be further elevated and amplified and we encourage more knowledge sharing from those who work in non-academic units.

Although the contributors to this volume represent many provinces of Canada, we recognize that not all regions are represented, such as those from the northern territories or the Atlantic provinces. This is both a limitation and an opportunity. As work on ethics and integrity in Canadian educational contexts continues to develop, it is essential to extend the dialogue to all regions of the country.

We acknowledge topics that we have not fully addressed in this volume that merit further inquiry such as engaging students as partners in academic integrity, as well as the ways machine learning and artificial intelligence are rapidly changing how we learn and teach. These omissions are also opportunities and there is no doubt in our minds that Canadians will continue to contribute to the knowledge base of ethics and integrity in educational contexts over time.

Concluding Remarks

Canadians are no longer obliged to rely on research from other countries to try and understand academic ethics and integrity in our own country. This volume provides a robust compendium of evidence of research, scholarship, and professional practice about academic integrity in Canada that not only showcases new and original thinking, but provides a base for future research, as well as policy and practice development. The chapters also contribute to the growing body of global scholarship on educational integrity, and provide substantive content that may be relevant to readers in other countries.

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