

# Academic Integrity

## What is Academic Integrity?<sup>1</sup>

Academic integrity is a fundamental principle of teaching, learning, scholarship and research.

It is a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values:

honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility.

### Scholastic Discipline

Teacher Candidates are expected to demonstrate a level of academic integrity befitting a degree or diploma in Education and membership in the teaching profession. Any form of academic dishonesty on the part of a student undermines the integrity of the Faculty's degrees and diplomas, and raises grave doubts about whether or not that student should be permitted to proceed towards graduation.

(Find Western's policy on Scholastic Discipline at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>)

### Western's Code of Student Conduct

Any conduct on the part of a student that has, or might reasonably be seen to have, an adverse effect on the reputation . . . of the University (e.g., furnishing false information) . . . is subject to discipline under this Code.

(Find Western's *Code of Student Conduct* at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>)

## Integrity is an essential part of any true educational experience.

Integrity is important in Education precisely because integrity is important in all areas of life. If we don't have integrity in the small things, if we find it possible to justify plagiarism or shoddy work in things that don't seem important, how will we resist doing the same in areas that really do matter—in areas, for example, where students' well-being, learning, and educational futures may be at stake; where the reputation of the institution or profession is at stake; or where your own character and trustworthiness is at stake?

Personal integrity is not a quality with which we're born. It's a quality of character that must be nurtured. We can only be persons of integrity if we practice it every day. And, basically, academic integrity requires the same things of you as a student as it requires of me as a Faculty member.

I will do my best to live up to my responsibilities. If you feel I've failed to do so, you have every right to call me on it. If you do, I have a responsibility to give you respectful consideration. If you feel that I do not do these things, you have the right (and responsibility) to bring this to the attention of my Dean.

At the same time, I have a right to expect that you will live up to your responsibilities. If I get a sense that you're not doing so, it is a matter of my academic integrity that I call you on it. Indeed, in certain circumstances (such as cheating or plagiarism), I may be required to charge you with a violation of UWO policy because, at Western, "scholastic offences are taken seriously."

Academic integrity, as with so much in life, involves a system of interconnected rights and responsibilities that reflect our mutual dependence upon one another. The success of our individual efforts in the B.Ed. program, as with so much in life, depends on all of us conscientiously exercising our rights and living up to our responsibilities. And the failure of any of us—even just one of us—to do what is required will diminish, however slightly, the opportunity for the rest to achieve their goals. That is why it's essential for all of us in this Faculty to practice academic integrity. Practice today will lay a solid foundation for practice tomorrow, and the day after that, and the day after that, so that through daily practice integrity will come to be woven throughout the fabric of our lives, and thus through at least a part of the fabric of society.

Retrieved from <http://www.mcmaster.ca/ell/resources/nifty.notes/david.godden/Integrity.pdf> and modified.

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<sup>1</sup> The Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) *Fundamental Values Project*, 1999. Retrieved on August 9, 2008, from [http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/academic\\_integrity.htm](http://www.uwo.ca/tsc/academic_integrity.htm)