The Impact of Academic Integrity on Students' Lives

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Did you know that academic integrity can be useful outside of school? The International

Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) outlines "six fundamental values of academic integrity:

honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage" in *The Fundamental Values of*

Academic Integrity.[1] These six values embody what it means to have academic integrity; they

will also help promote and facilitate academic integrity.[2] When students have academic integrity,

it means that they are honest with their work, and effectively analyze and cite their sources in

their assignments. By practicing the fundamental skills and values of academic integrity, students

develop their abilities, which will enhance their academic, personal, and professional lives.

Introduction and explanation of evidence

Thesis statement

Academic integrity helps students build high-level learning skills, such as problem-

solving and critical thinking skills, that will be applicable to their academic life. Students most

often participate in academic integrity by writing essays that use outside sources to support their

own voices. Effective essays will demonstrate students' academic integrity when students do

their own work honestly and use proper citations, thereby giving credit to the sources' authors.

By participating in academic integrity, students can develop a variety of skills. As most essays

require primary or secondary sources, students will be required to use their problem-solving

skills to see how the sources will best fit their own paper.[3] Moreover, students will develop both

problem-solving and critical-thinking skills by effectively using sources to support their own

argument. According to Lavelle et al.'s research on undergraduate nursing students, essay

writing "has been recognized as a valuable tool for learning, [and] development of critical

Indirect citation

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[1] International Center for Academic Integrity, *Fundamental Values,* 4.

[2] International Center for Academic Integrity, *Fundamental Values*, 4.

[3] Robertson, "Academic Essay Writing," 265.

Single-spaced with one line between each entry

thinking."[4] Academic essays, whether research-based or persuasive, all require students to develop their own thoughts while utilizing the skills and knowledge that they have learned. Moreover, when students apply their knowledge, develop new ideas, and use different perspectives, they will be able to develop and demonstrate their critical thinking skills.[5] For instance, Sarah Elaine Eaton asked her students to trace the history of Maslow's pyramid such that they can investigate library materials, assess primary sources, and analyze how one source relates to other interpretations of the same concept.[6] Through this exercise, the students gathered, analyzed, and cited historical evidence, which are necessary steps of the essay-writing process.[7] Ultimately, as students continue to write essays throughout their academic career, they will be able to develop and refine their skills to use in all areas of life.

When students uphold academic integrity, they develop other skills—apart from critical-thinking and analysis—that positively impact their personal life alongside their academic life. People encounter all kinds of problems throughout their life, such as conflict, personal dilemmas, and more. By developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills, students will also be able to better "manage stress and conflict, make better decisions, and achieve [their] goals."[8] In addition, when students do their own work, not only are they able to arrive at unique perspectives, but they can also receive accurate feedback for assignments and gain respect for the

Indirect citation continued

Integrated quote

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[4] Lavelle et al., "Writing Approaches of Nursing Students," *Nurse Education Today* 33, no. 1 (2013), quoted in Dahl et al., "Students' Approaches."

[5] Sharpe, "Demonstrating Critical Thinking."

[6] Eaton, *Academic Integrity*.

Each citation has a first-line indent

cademic Integrity.

[8] *PsychNewsDaily*, "Problem-Solving Examples."

learning process itself.[9] Receiving accurate feedback will allow students to understand their own strengths and weaknesses, reflect on them, and improve accordingly. In other words, as students continuously write with academic integrity, they will be able to practice and develop different skills. For example, they develop the ability to self-regulate their learning such that they can engage with the materials in a precise and organized way.[10] In a similar vein, a positive environment can be especially beneficial as the student improves upon these skills. In many cases, academic integrity is seen as the student's responsibility to uphold, but in recent research, there has been a turn toward recognizing the influence of multiple participants in the academic community; specifically, "students, faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders within the learning institution each have different and complementary responsibilities."[11] Apart from promoting awareness of academic integrity and outlining clear rules for students, instructors also emphasize the importance of embodying these positive values—such as honesty and respect— when teaching.[12] With this perspective in mind, it becomes clear that students can successfully develop their critical-thinking skills, enhance their learning, and become hardworking individuals in a collaborative environment that consists of supportive staff and faculty members.

Upholding and learning about academic integrity will also help students to develop characteristics and qualities that future employers will value. Upon assessing previous research in this field, Lee asserts that "[a]cademic integrity is an indicator of future workplace behaviour"

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[9] Lee, "Academic Integrity is Important."

[10] Nenezić et al., "Students and Teachers," 78.

[11] Eaton et al., "Faculty Perspectives," 43.

[12] Eaton et al., "Faculty Perspectives," 46.

and emphasizes the life-long benefits of embodying integrity.[13] In terms of what and how students can embody academic integrity, the six qualities that the ICAI outlined come into play: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage.[14] These qualities will help students with their employability, as they represent traits that employers seek out in potential employees. For example, demonstrating respect in academic integrity may look like actively listening to others, openly receiving feedback, respecting other people's ideas, and being an empathetic individual.[15] These actions are all important to the workplace, whether students are interacting with their potential boss, coworkers, and clients or customers. Thus, as students continue to implement academic integrity in their studies, they will be able to further prepare themselves for the workplace by developing suitable traits needed for employment. Dr. Arthur W. Foshay, who was the president of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in the United States, also supports this notion as he argues that "education [related to academic integrity] develops human intellect, serves social needs, contributes to the economy, creates an effective workforce, prepares the young for careers or jobs and promotes political and social ideologies."[16] Through the development of academic integrity in their studies, students will not only expand their career-oriented skills and attitudes, but they will also shape their worldviews and contribute to society at large.
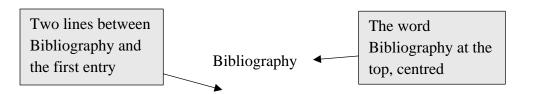

Indirect citation

[13] Lee, "Academic Integrity is Important."

[14] International Center for Academic Integrity, *Fundamental Values*, 4.

[15] International Center for Academic Integrity, *Fundamental Values*, 8.

[16] Foshay, "The Curriculum Matrix: Transcendence and Mathematics," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 6, quoted in Baker-Gardner, *Plagiarism Policies*.

Ultimately, academic integrity, which students develop in academic settings through careful completion of assignments and exams, helps students improve skills that will benefit them beyond the classroom. These skills include engaging in thorough research, communicating in open and respectful ways, critical thinking, and willingness to learn new information. Thus, if students would like to improve themselves in different areas of life, one of the best ways to do so during school is to adhere to the values of academic integrity. As they move forward as working adults, students will use these values—which are related to integrity—and be able to successfully navigate new roles and situations in a resilient way.

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