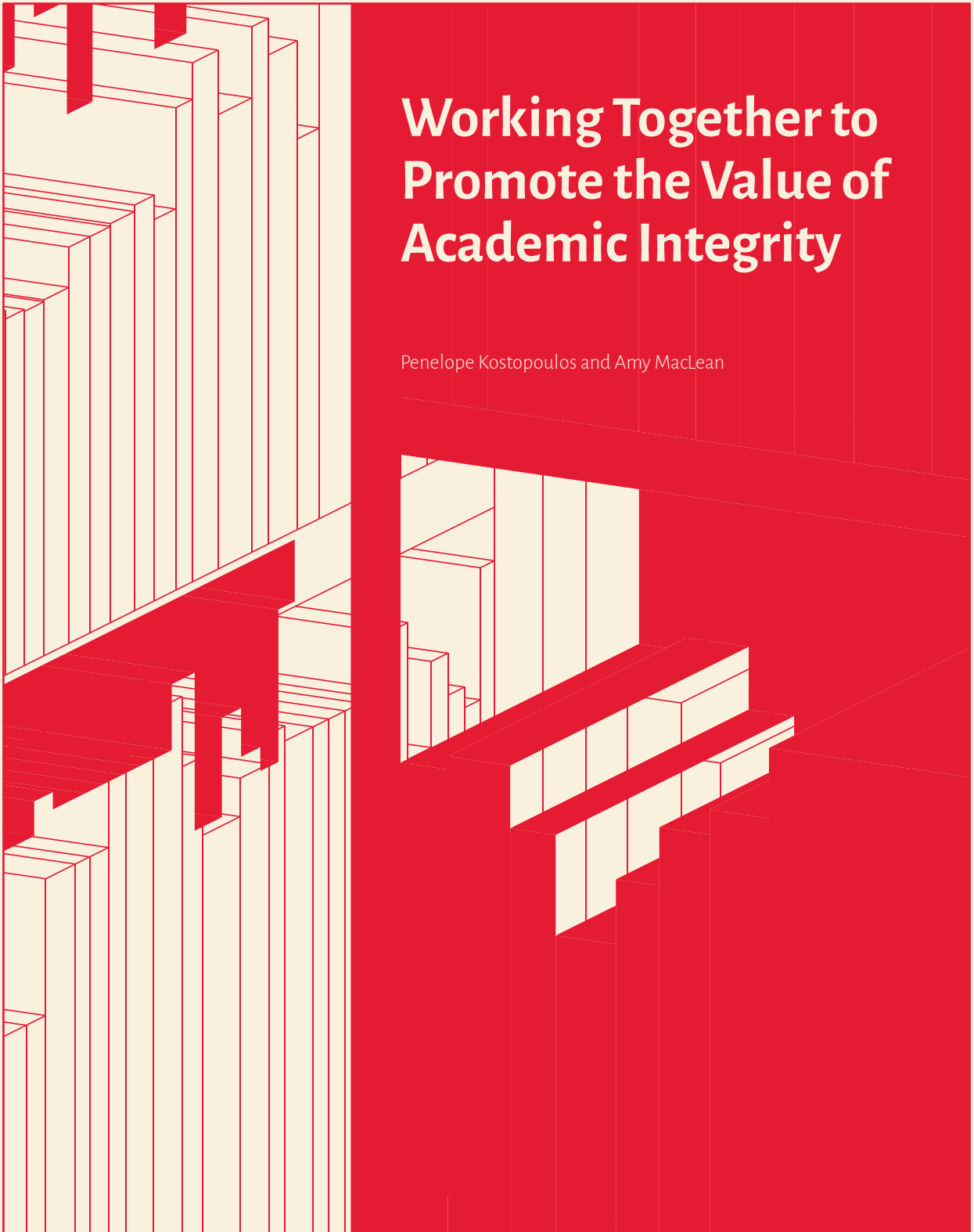


Working Together to Promote the Value of Academic Integrity

Penelope Kostopoulos and Amy MacLean



Source: iStock/Shuoshu

Academic integrity is a fairly new concept for some of our students. Students come to CEGEPs and colleges from diverse backgrounds and high schools. As such, they have learned about academic integrity in different ways. Over the years, our experience has shown that many students are anxious about some of the new responsibilities that they face in higher education. One of the most important things that we can do for them is to demystify academic integrity, and to give all of our students an equal opportunity to build the skills that they need in order to succeed in higher education. This includes how to conduct themselves in relation to academic integrity. Many years ago, we recognized that, at Marianopolis, we need to do this through college-wide programming. This macro-level approach ensures that students hear messages about academic integrity from many different voices and see various perspectives on the issue during their time at the college.

As the Associate Dean, Student Success and the Coordinator of Library Services at Marianopolis College, we both play a central role in how the college addresses the issues surrounding academic integrity. In our respective roles, we work with students, faculty, staff, and administrators. This experience gives us a unique perspective on the pedagogy that frames this issue and an understanding of the policies, initiatives, and collaboration that are needed to promote and apply the values associated with academic integrity.

The recent broad release of ChatGPT and other AI text-generating software has brought academic integrity to the

forefront of discussions in education again. How does a college respond to these new tools? How do we explain academic integrity to students in light of these new technologies? How do we talk about the inevitable grey areas? Going forward, we trust that the policies, initiatives, and the community engagement that is present at the college will help us to address such new questions and to navigate an ever-changing technological landscape.

Academic integrity presents a mix of interesting challenges. It is at once an aspirational code, showing us who we want to be as an academic community, as well as a prescribed list of do's and don'ts (and some might say it

is more about don'ts than do's). With this seeming dichotomy, our experience shows that it is most effective to approach academic integrity from multiple angles.

Our core definition of academic integrity

When we want to explain the college's expectations in regard to academic integrity, we refer to our Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA). As in many other colleges, it is the starting point for much of our work as it ensures that we are all working with the same information.

The IPESA (Marianopolis College, 2021a) dedicates an entire section to academic integrity and related issues. The section opens with the statement that "in keeping with the principles of fairness and honesty, and consistent with the standards upheld by institutions of higher learning, the College is committed to promoting and protecting academic integrity" (IPESA, 4.0).

This definition goes on to say:

- Students are expected to submit work that is entirely their own. Any reference (direct quotes or otherwise) to another person's ideas, content, answers, or manner of expression must be cited in conformity with guidelines provided by the teacher (IPESA, 4.1.1);
- Students must be honest and truthful in all matters covered by the IPESA (e.g., provision of medical notes, language-proficiency level, attendance, etc.) (IPESA, 4.1.2).

Also embedded in our IPESA is the statement that "all members of the College community play a role in upholding standards of academic integrity and in educating and supporting students in matters related to academic integrity" (IPESA, 4.3.1). Tellingly, the value of integrity is also incorporated in the college's statement of values (Marianopolis College, 2021b).

In support of this commitment, many members of the Marianopolis

community, including administration, faculty, and staff, seek to create opportunities to educate, promote, and discuss the value and importance of academic integrity at the college, and, indeed, in the wider academic community.

Our Student Success Profile

One such opportunity was in the elaboration of our definition of student success, which is part of the Student Success Profile. The profile is "a reference in the development of all our programs, initiatives, and services that guide us in supporting our students in their pursuit of excellence across various dimensions of the student experience" (Marianopolis College, 2022). More specifically, the concept of integrity is part of the "Academics" domain, in that the "student strives for a high academic standard and upholds academic integrity" (Marianopolis College, 2022).

Within the Student Success Profile, we also make a connection to the International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI) by incorporating some of the values that ICAI identifies as part of the foundation of academic integrity, such as justice, equity, and courage:

ICAI defines academic integrity as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (ICAI, 2021, p. 4).

Creating opportunities to promote academic integrity

We would like to highlight five main opportunities the college uses to engage with and promote academic integrity during the students' time at the college. Academic integrity and the promotion and education of the values related to this topic have been at the forefront of our programming for many years. Our experience has shown that focusing on orientation activities, broad dissemination of information, and alignment between services and messages ensures that our students are introduced to the concept of academic integrity early and know where to reach out for help.

First opportunity

Orientation activities

Student information session before classes start

Every year, our first-year students are introduced to the concept of academic integrity before starting classes. Orientation takes place in the Fall semester, and includes an in-person information session. During this session, students hear from academic advisors and services. The orientation addresses some of the challenges that students may face in the transition from high school to college. For example, we tell them to be aware of the condensed nature of the college semester, and discuss the accelerated pace that they will experience in their courses.

During the orientation session, a staff member from the Office of the Associate Dean, Student Success, presents the IPESA and explains some of the topics that are covered by the policy. Expectations for evaluations and proper academic conduct are explained, and some of the college's resources on the topic are presented. It is important to note that the person presenting on the topic of the IPESA is the very same person whom students can contact in the future, should they have questions about this policy.

This is a very important event for our new students, as it ensures that they receive information about academic expectations and relevant resources, including the support staff that they can reach out to. The attendance rate shows this, as 90-95% of the incoming cohort attends.

Following the orientation, we use the online learning management system Omnivox to share information about the IPESA, examination rules, and academic integrity. In our experience, we have found that students prefer when we present information using infographics. With this in mind, we created a simple one-page infographic that helps students know when to consult the IPESA and where to find relevant information. We also make the document available in print at the Office of the Associate Dean, Student Success.

In-class sessions in the first month

Following the orientation, in the first weeks of classes, these same first-year students participate in an in-depth session on academic integrity. All first-year students take an English course in their first semester at the college, and the English Department is generous in sharing some of their class time for this purpose.

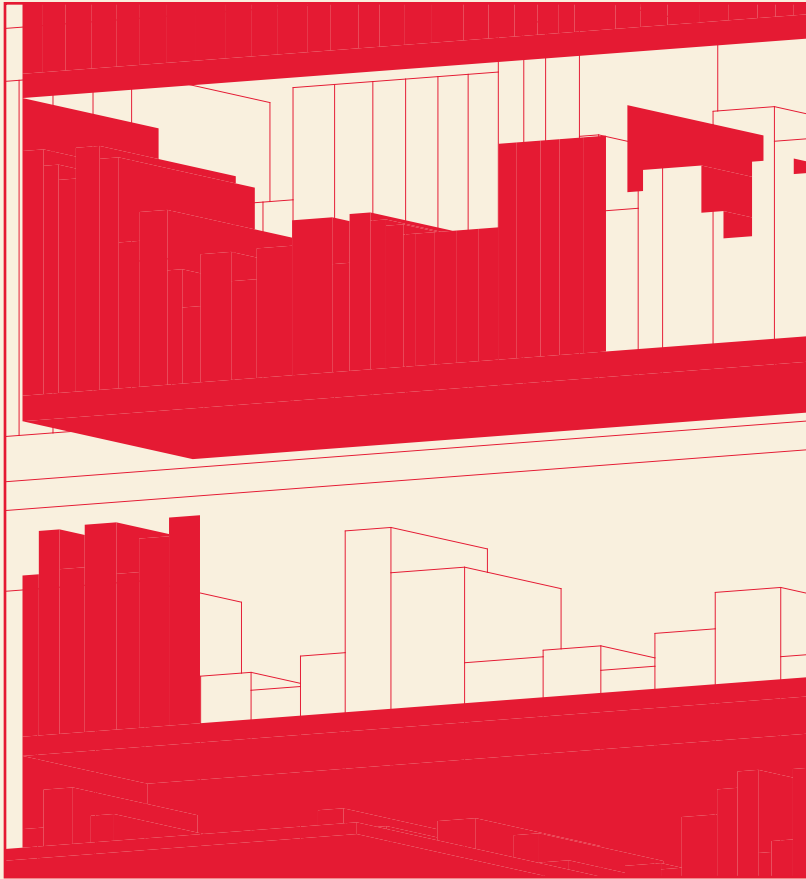
Over the course of four weeks, librarians visit each English class to deliver a 45-minute session on academic integrity. In total, two professional librarians visit 30-35 sections of English 101. During the visit, the librarians use a slideshow to highlight specific sections of the IPESA, explain cheating and plagiarism, and share resources related to citation styles.

In this session, students hear about and discuss what it means to be part of an academic community. Also, it is an opportunity for the English teachers to make links to their course material and to other related issues, such as their expectations when it comes to citation styles and the use of secondary sources. In our experi-

ence, the students respond most enthusiastically to the material when their teacher contributes to the session by sharing personal experiences, reminders, and tips.

An important facet of these sessions is that they allow students to view the topic of academic integrity from two different perspectives, i.e. the teacher and the librarian. Moreover, the session illustrates that the issue extends beyond the walls of their English classroom, as the librarians are clear that academic integrity concerns all courses, regardless of the student's program, and that it is essential in academic research. After the session, the slide presentation is available in the teacher-student communication module of Omnivox, LEA, for students to review the concepts and material. The slideshow is critical to the success of this presentation, as it ensures that the librarians present the same information to all students in 30+ English sections.

This program has been in place at the college for almost 20 years. Every summer, the library and the Dean's Office work together to update the content so that it reflects current policies and practices. We also discuss different approaches to the material. Over the years, we have experimented, among others, with in-class surveys and citation exercises, and the use of clicker technology and mobile phone apps. Through all of this, the slideshow remains a reliable way to ensure the consistency of the librarians' presentations to the entire incoming cohort.



Another important aspect of this presentation is that it gives the students the opportunity to meet the librarians. In connecting with the librarians for the first time, we are certain that many students feel more at ease in the library and welcome to approach the reference desk to ask their questions.

Anecdotally, we can also report that students occasionally approach the librarian to discuss ethical questions. For example, a student may ask if they would be in breach of academic integrity if they made a certain choice, or if a specific scenario would be considered cheating. In such cases, we believe that the librarian's relative neutrality is part of the draw for the student, since the

librarian does not necessarily know the student, nor have any power over the student's grades. Instead, the librarian is there as a knowledgeable resource to help the student navigate their academic career with integrity.

Reminding parents of their role

Every year in mid-September, about one month after classes have started, the college hosts a session that is aimed exclusively at the parents of incoming students.

The session is attended by hundreds of parents, and we share much of the same information that is shared with our students during the orientation. Over the years, we have found that

sharing the information with parents, including information regarding important policies and resources, helps them in the important role that they play in supporting our students, their children.

Through all of these orientation activities, the importance of academic integrity is introduced and discussed, expectations are set, and students are informed about the many resources that are available to them across the college.

Second opportunity

In the classroom

As we seek to expand on and reinforce the lessons that were imparted during the orientation and the students' first semester at the college, we continue reminding students about academic integrity in various ways.

A template statement regarding academic integrity, for example, is included in each course outline. All faculty have to use the same template, which is updated by the Office of the Academic Dean when necessary. The template statement includes information from the IPESA, defines cheating and plagiarism, and describes the process related to academic misconduct. In the Winter 2023 semester, we updated the statement to include information regarding AI text-generating software that faculty could adapt in their respective course outlines.

Another way in which we ensure that students build the skills associated with academic integrity is through methodology courses that are part of several programs. These courses are an ideal setting for discussions on proper

research techniques, documentation strategies, and citation styles. With the ongoing program revisions and the update of methodology courses, we plan to further incorporate the role of the library in research, citation, and, ultimately, academic integrity.

In Social Science, for example, the new methodology arc (i.e. the four courses: "Intellectual Methods," "Qualitative Research," "Quantitative Methods," and "Integrative Project") will work on scaffolding the competencies related to academic integrity and building the academic rigour that is required in higher education. In the new Science program, the student exit profile indicates that: "Upon completion of the program, a successful graduate of the Marianopolis Science program will be able to uphold academic values: a. apply standards of academic integrity; b. respect intellectual property rights and privacy norms" (Marianopolis College, 2023). With the revision of the Science program, students will learn the skills associated with academic integrity in different courses and the new Integrative Project course, which will serve as a comprehensive assessment, will evaluate them in their final semester at the college.

Aside from program revisions, some departments have developed discipline-specific activities and approaches. For example, within the Mathematics discipline, students are allowed to work together to solve homework assignments. They are asked, however, to develop their own answer and cite who they worked on the problem with. The Mathematics department developed a quiz to help students understand how to collaborate with integrity when they work together on these assignments.

The quiz is completed by all students at the beginning of their first Mathematics course. It lays the groundwork for all subsequent Mathematics courses, by ensuring that all students understand the appropriate ways to proceed with assignments and how to cite assistance from others. In the English department, several faculty members have created activities that they run in their classrooms to help students learn how to research, how to cite different types of sources, how to paraphrase, and what vocabulary to use when quoting or summarizing the work of others.

At the college level, it is important to be aware of these independent faculty initiatives taking place within departments so that we can share more broadly when possible. For example, Pedagogical Development Days are a good opportunity for faculty to share strategies and activities with each other.

Third opportunity Support services

While the library plays a central role in disseminating information related to academic integrity and in supporting students with their research and citation questions, many other college support services also play an important role in supporting students one-on-one with their academic integrity questions and concerns.

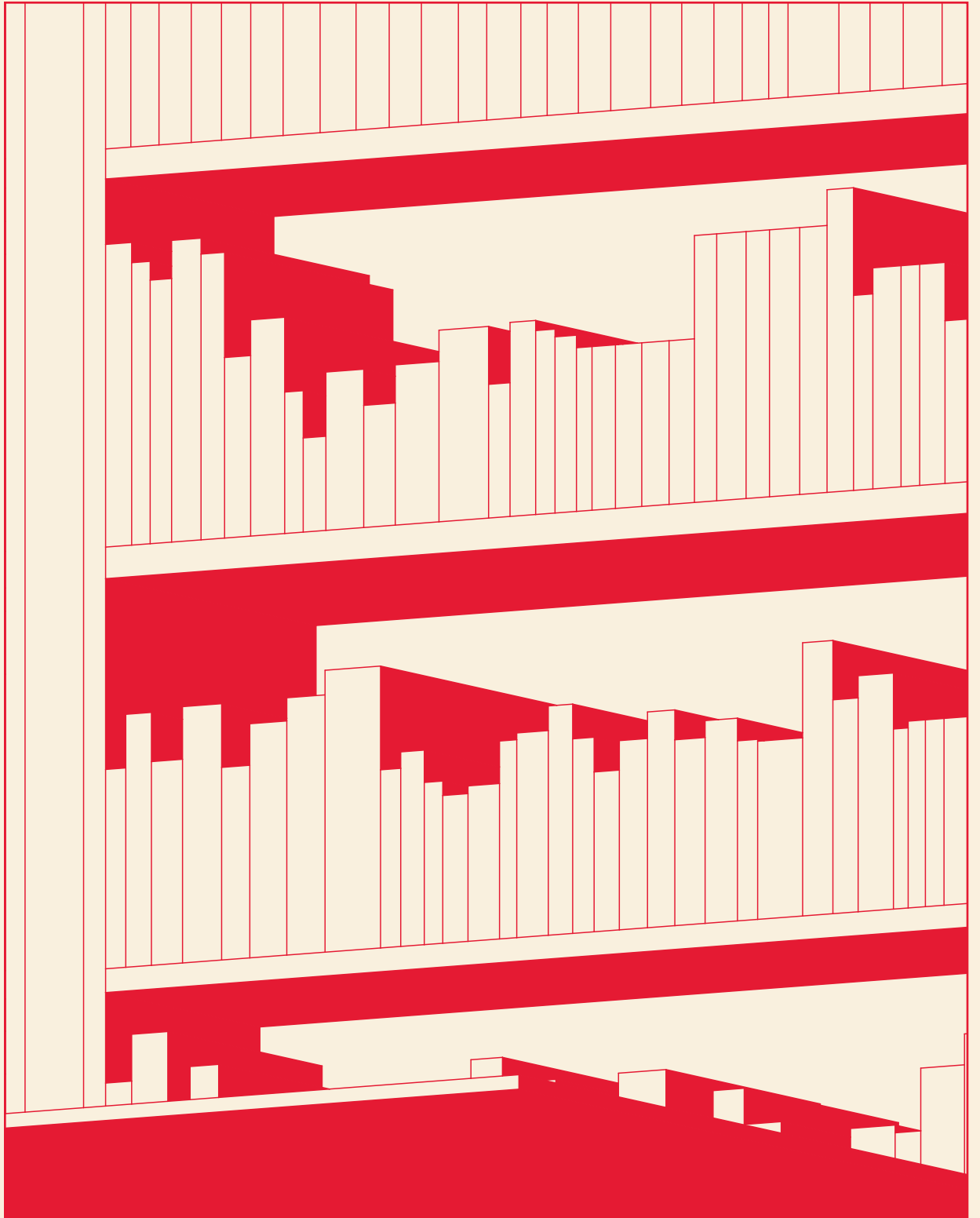
Depending on their needs, students may be referred from one service area to another for assistance. For example, a teacher may refer their students to the library for assistance with citation style, and the library may send a student to the English monitors for

assistance with summarizing and paraphrasing. With many people involved in supporting our students in their various responsibilities, we need to maintain consistency and a continuum of support for students. As such, communication between departments and collaborative structures is important, and it is critical that there are common messages across services and departments.

The Office of the Associate Dean, Student Success is identified as the central service that handles issues related to academic integrity and refers students to different services depending on the support that they require. We share documentation on academic integrity that is developed for students between services and meet to discuss updates to important policies. In this way, the staff in Student Affairs and Registrar Services can be up-to-date on the information that students receive and know where to refer students if they have questions.

Crucial to much of this work, a very popular online repository developed by the library using SpringShare's LibGuide platform—the *Marianopolis College Library's LibGuides*¹—serves as a common source of information on academic integrity and citation styles for students, faculty, and staff. It also provides information to answer two

¹ Interested readers may consult the *Marianopolis College Library's LibGuides* [libguides.marianopolis.edu], and more specifically the section on academic integrity [libguides.marianopolis.edu/AI].



basic questions on academic integrity: *what* is it, and *why* do we practice it. The LibGuides quote from the IPESA, and remind students that they need to get informed about it, which allows the documentation to close the loop regarding academic integrity by pointing to the same main document.

In addition to answers to those two questions, a Resources tab offers tips and reminders on how to practise academic integrity in very practical ways. For example, students are reminded to do their own work, to keep track of information about the sources they use, to participate in class discussions, to respect copyright, to cite their sources. *Citation Styles* is the most heavily used LibGuide in the collection. Both faculty and staff refer students to the *Citation Styles* LibGuide regularly. And the librarians refer to it dozens of times per day as they work with students to answer their questions at the reference desk.

The LibGuides are living documents. As we monitor our students' changing needs across the college's various services points, the LibGuides can be updated easily in-house. This allows the college to respond to new questions from students and to adapt to new requirements from faculty. In light of AI text-generating software, in the coming months we will be working on updating the LibGuides to address how this type of software can be used with integrity and cited properly.

Fourth opportunity

Exams and evaluations

Exams and evaluations provide key opportunities to review the college processes related to academic

integrity and to remind students of their responsibilities.

In the weeks preceding the evaluation period and final exams, the importance of academic integrity is emphasized in messages from the Academic Dean's Office to students on Omnivox. We have to acknowledge that although these communications put some focus on the values surrounding academic integrity, the emphasis is on the rules and penalties surrounding academic misconduct. Students are reminded to inquire with their teachers for specific instructions and to follow the exam rules and relevant policies.

At Marianopolis, the Final Exam Committee meets early in the Fall semester every year to review examination rules before they are shared with students.

This committee includes department chairs, the Associate Dean, Student Success, the Associate Dean, Programs, as well as faculty involved with the coordination of exams in their respective departments. The committee is responsible for the wording of the Declaration of Academic Integrity that is included on the front cover of every official college-issued exam booklet.

This declaration provides a moment for students to acknowledge and reflect on their responsibilities, and to declare their commitment to honesty and integrity. The pledge is shared broadly with all faculty every semester through a link sent by the Associate Dean, Student Success, as it is intended to be included in all evaluations at the college.

This macro-level approach ensures that students hear messages about academic integrity from many different voices and see various perspectives on the issue during their time at the college.

Marianopolis is a relatively small college, and we felt, as discussed earlier, that it was important to have a single point person for all matters related to academic misconduct. At Marianopolis, this person is the Associate Dean, Student Success. Discussions related to academic integrity, cheating and plagiarism can be complex and are sometimes stressful. As such, we think it is helpful to have a clear process with this central person who is ready to discuss such matters with faculty.

Information regarding the process is shared with new faculty during their onboarding process. Knowing that situations like this can be discussed and reviewed is important, especially for sessional faculty who may be reluctant to report academic integrity incidents when they first start at the college. The process allows for transparency and offers the support faculty have expressed a need for on this sensitive topic.

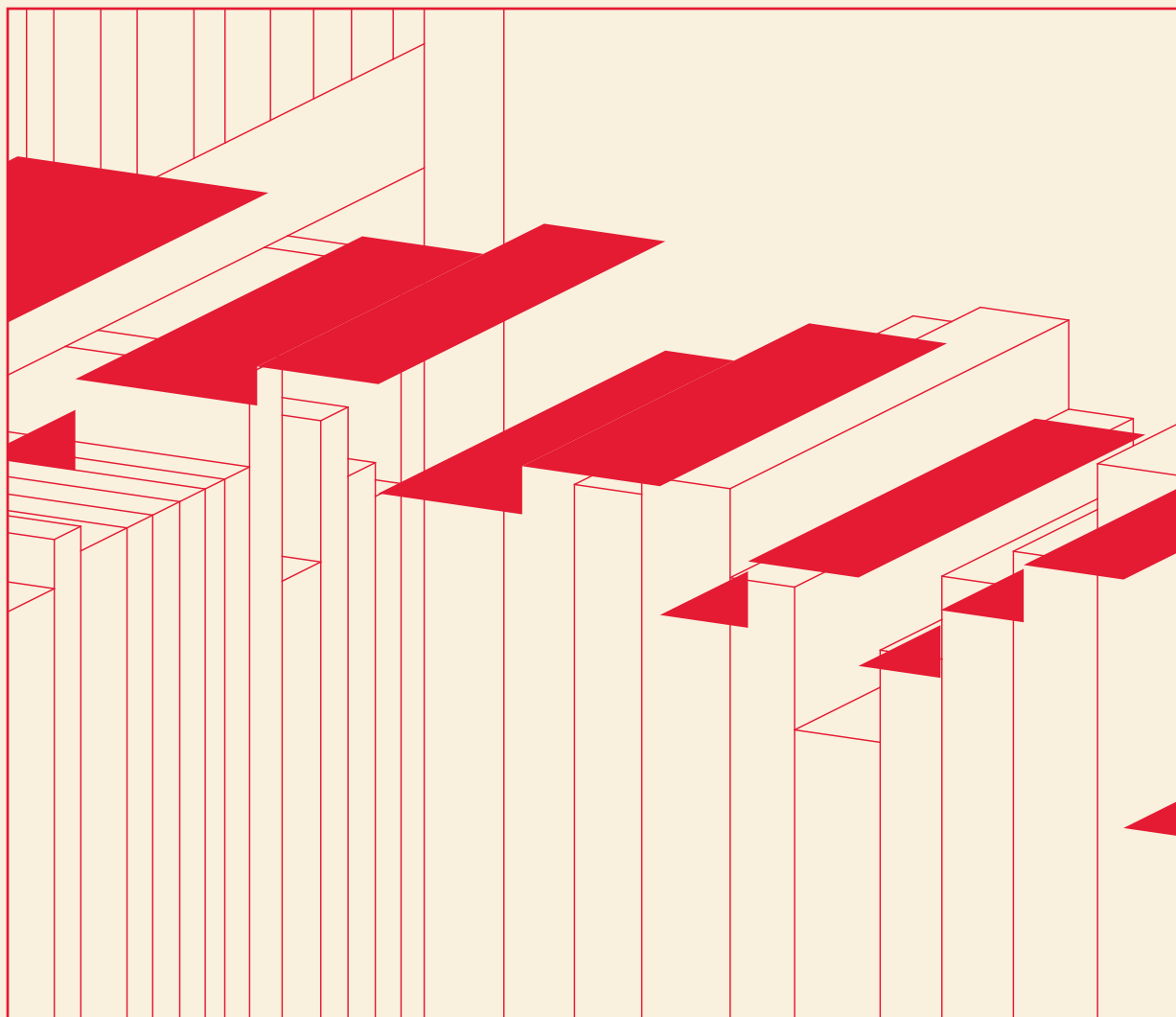
Fifth opportunity

College committees

To build a common voice between faculty, staff, and administration, academic integrity is at the centre of at least two college committees that focus on the IPESA and evaluations: the Final Exam Committee, mentioned earlier, as well as a committee that reviews the implementation of the IPESA. In addition, academic integrity has been the focus of discussions during strategic planning, as well as an important element of the development of the Student Success Profile, which is part of the Student Success Plan.

The college has also created ad hoc task forces to discuss current issues related to academic integrity. During the 2020-2021 academic year, when the COVID-19 pandemic gripped the province, the Academic Dean created the Academic Integrity Task Force. This task force included members of the Academic Dean's Office, the library, two faculty members, and two students. At the time, the students were not on campus, but learning and writing exams online. As such, the main objective of the task force was to find a way to promote the values of academic integrity to our students and remind them of the college's rules and regulations.

One of the most important lessons to emerge from the work of this task force was that we need to include our students in the discussion and process. We found this to be especially true when it comes to the dissemination of messages that have a broader reach with our student community. It was gratifying to see that the students were concerned about academic integrity issues and were excited to work with the administration and faculty to create videos, infographics, and other communication campaigns. Interestingly, the students saw the issue in terms of equity and provided important insights into how students perceived the issues surrounding honesty and integrity during online teaching and learning. We have continued to work with the Marianopolis Student Union to disseminate information that will help students understand their rights and responsibilities. This semester, they created a series of Instagram posts related to the IPESA and referred students to the appropriate section of the policy to find out more information.



Source: iStock/Shuoshu

In January 2023, the college assembled an ad hoc task force to discuss new AI text-generative software. The task force is composed of faculty from several departments, the Associate Dean, Student Success, the Coordinator of Library Services, and a pedagogical counsellor. Its mandate is to develop resources, activities, and projects to support faculty and students in how they engage with these tools. In addition to the mandate, the task force is looking forward to assisting with the organization of the college's upcoming Pedagogical Day, where we want faculty to have opportunities to learn more about AI text-generative software, to discuss

its potential effects and impacts, and to consider how these touch on issues of academic integrity. It is important to include faculty from all departments in this discussion, in order to understand how this software may affect different disciplines across the college, as well as pedagogy inside the classroom. This is an issue that cannot be addressed by individuals or by individual departments alone. Rather, the college will work as a community to understand the implications of these new developments and to decide on a response. We are confident that the groundwork that we have laid at the college over the years will allow us to respond to

changes and challenges such as the one that we are experiencing currently.

Learning about academic integrity in higher education

As we reflect on how our college communicates on the topic of academic integrity with students and how we discuss the issue within departments, we can identify a number of elements, detailed in **Table 1**, that we feel are essential to create a climate in which we can more easily integrate and promote academic integrity.

Table 1

Important elements for academic integrity education

1. Incorporate the values of integrity and honesty in the college's communications to students.

Prepare a letter to students from the Office of the Academic Dean in preparation for final evaluations that highlights the college's commitment to the values of integrity, honesty, and respect.

2. Set clear expectations with students regarding their responsibilities at the college.

Describe student's responsibilities during orientation and include the college's examination rules in all communication related to final evaluations including in the exam booklet that is used for all evaluations.

3. Implement activities in a continuous manner throughout the student's journey at the college.

Set the tone with a common presentation on academic integrity in one of the mandatory first semester courses and work with program committees to incorporate academic integrity in methodology and other program courses.

4. Ensure that practical information about academic integrity and citation styles is easily accessible in a centralized online resource.

Create a LibGuide or another web-accessible guide that faculty and staff are referred to by librarians, faculty, and college services.

5. Collaborate with students to disseminate information about academic integrity and its importance in higher education.

Use the student union social media (e.g. Instagram) at opportune moments during the semester to disseminate information.

6. Maintain open channels and close collaboration between departments, including the library, which plays a central role in educating on the topic of academic integrity, as well as the Academic Dean's Office and other college services.

Identify a central person in the Office of the Academic Dean who communicates regularly with faculty and staff on the topic of academic integrity and more particularly with the library to update content and create a common voice.

7. Remain responsive to the changing landscape of academic integrity, including all stakeholders in discussions.

Create ad hoc committees with representatives from faculty, administration, and staff to handle academic integrity concerns related to online teaching, AI software, etc.

Our ultimate goal being to empower our students to make good decisions and develop academically, these elements allow us to create opportunities to integrate information and lessons along their paths, as they progress through their program of studies, make connections with new people, and develop their academic persona—a term used by one of our English teachers and that we have adopted in our discussions with students.

Conclusion

Overall, the college's programming around academic integrity allows us to ensure that all students receive the same information and have access to the support that they need. Throughout the year, academic integrity is a prominent topic of discussions and factors in communications at the college. Anecdotally, we can say that, overall, faculty and students are aware of the expectations for students, as well as the resources and services that are available.

As we indicated earlier, students come from different high schools with a variety of understandings of the topic and the different tools and guides that they need to be aware of. In addition, we acknowledge that there is not one solution or one way to proceed with a multifaceted topic such as academic integrity. That being said, we are confident that the initiatives that we have put in place enable us to reach most of our students and provide them with the information and support that they need. We keep track of how many students attend the information sessions, monitor the number of students that consult our LibGuides, track violations

of academic integrity, and survey students every few years regarding their awareness of the IPESA and their responsibilities. To be sure, there are times when we find out about gaps in the programming through individual discussions with faculty and students. We use these occasions as opportunities to review, rethink, and update some of our approaches.

We recognize that every college has its own structures and culture. All the same, we hope that some of the elements that we have identified as critical to the development of a culture of academic integrity at Marianopolis College will be useful to others. There are many ways to educate students about academic integrity and different approaches to handling academic integrity, and this work is always in progress. Perhaps others can adapt some of the ideas that we have discussed in this article.

At Marianopolis College, another one of our core values is "community." This value highlights our intention for Marianopolis faculty, staff, and administrators to "come together in mutual respect and trust" with students "at the heart of all our endeavours" (Marianopolis College (2021b)).

We believe that our community extends beyond the 'village' walls of Marianopolis. We have worked with other colleges in the past, and look forward to sharing and learning from others in the future. Like our students, we too are always learning. —

References

International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) (2021). *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*, (3rd ed.) [academicintegrity.org/the-fundamental-valuesof-academic-integrity]

Marianopolis College (2021a). *Institutional Policy on the Evaluation of Student Achievement (IPESA)*. [marianopolis.edu/IPESA].

Marianopolis College (2021b). *Mission, Vision and Values*. [marianopolis.edu/mission/]

Marianopolis College (2022). *Student Success Plan*. [marianopolis.edu/about/student-success-plan/]

Marianopolis College (2023). *Science student exit profile*.



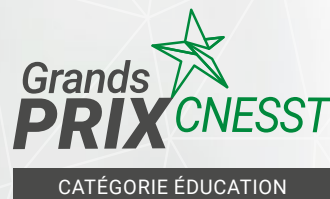
Penelope Kostopoulos is the Associate Dean, Student Success at Marianopolis College. She holds a Bachelor's in Early Childhood Education from Greece and a Master's and PhD in Neuroscience from McGill University. She has conducted research in memory, autism, and degenerative diseases and has taught at McGill University as well as in the CEGEP system.

p.kostopoulos@marianopolis.edu



Amy MacLean is the Coordinator of Library Services at Marianopolis College. She has worked at the College since 2003 and been the coordinator since 2010. She has a Bachelor's Degree in English and French from Bishop's University, and a Master's in Library and Information Studies from McGill University.

a.maclea@marianopolis.edu



Faites briller vos initiatives ou vos projets scolaires qui mobilisent et sensibilisent les élèves et les étudiants sur des sujets en matière **de normes du travail, d'équité salariale, et de santé et sécurité du travail !**

**Période d'inscription
du 3 avril au 31 mai 2023**

Pour plus de détails
sur le concours :
grandsprixnesst.com

DCI-300-923 (2023-03)

Commission des normes, de l'équité,
de la santé et de la sécurité du travail
grandsprixnesst.com

