Academic integrity

Concerns of different degree of academic misconduct:
- Impersonator in exam
- Cheating
- Plagiarism, paraphrasing books/articles, digital sources (e.g., Wikipedia, Google) without acknowledgement
- Personal assistant, personal tutor, borrow books from library to study, ChatGPT,
- Taking ideas from a study group discussion, free riders in group projects, etc.
- **Have the learners really learned?**

**Why do they happen?

**What are we trying to achieve through teaching and learning activities?

Some common reasons for cheating/poor integrity

1. **Pressure to succeed:** cheating is a necessary path to succeed or to meet expectations, could be culturally encouraged.

2. **Desire for personal gain:** to gain an advantage over others, not only in academics, but in sports and in workplace, fueled by "the winner takes all" practice.

3. **Fear of failure:** a sense of insecurity, to avoid negative outcomes reflecting a lower social status.

4. **Lack of consequences:** the belief/illusion that no serious consequence for their actions.

5. **Lack of ethical/moral values:** No strong sense of right and wrong, honesty and integrity is not highly valued, could be culturally influenced.

Cheating is never justified, it will stay when the underlying issues driving someone to cheat have not been addressed. **It is psychologically and biologically driven!**

Types of universities

The purpose of "university" education (I)

Explosion of higher education institutions
- 19,000 (from UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2021)

1. University as an institution for intellectual development
   - one-on-one or group interactions and exposure
   - focusing on personal development

2. University as a platform for knowledge creation driven by interest/need
   - research based on existing knowledge
   - innovative and creative work

- The outcome is usually less quantitative and is measured in long term.
- There are more frequent personal interactions, examples of practice, role models, opportunities of self reflection and discovery – guided by personal aspiration.

The purpose of "university" education (II)

3. University as a platform for vocational training
    - skill based training catered for a sector or a specific career,
      KPI = placement of jobs

4. University as a business operation
    - a sustainable operation to satisfy the market,
      KPI = financial gain for students or the institution

    The outcome is assessed on knowledge, skill, application, mass production, standardization, competence, employability, salary of the job, funding, etc.

**What are we trying to achieve in teaching & learning activities, e.g., assignments, assessment, tests and examinations, presentations, project work, in academic institutions?

Encouraging and assessing
- the effort to learn,
- the ability to draw on experience/knowledge,
- the ability to integrate and put it in practical use
- the true understanding, and
- the transformation of individuals

These qualities will reflect on the effectiveness of education, and
    be translated into the future success of individuals.

Who are the participants in this exercise?

Change of emphasis in Gen Y and Z (teenagers)
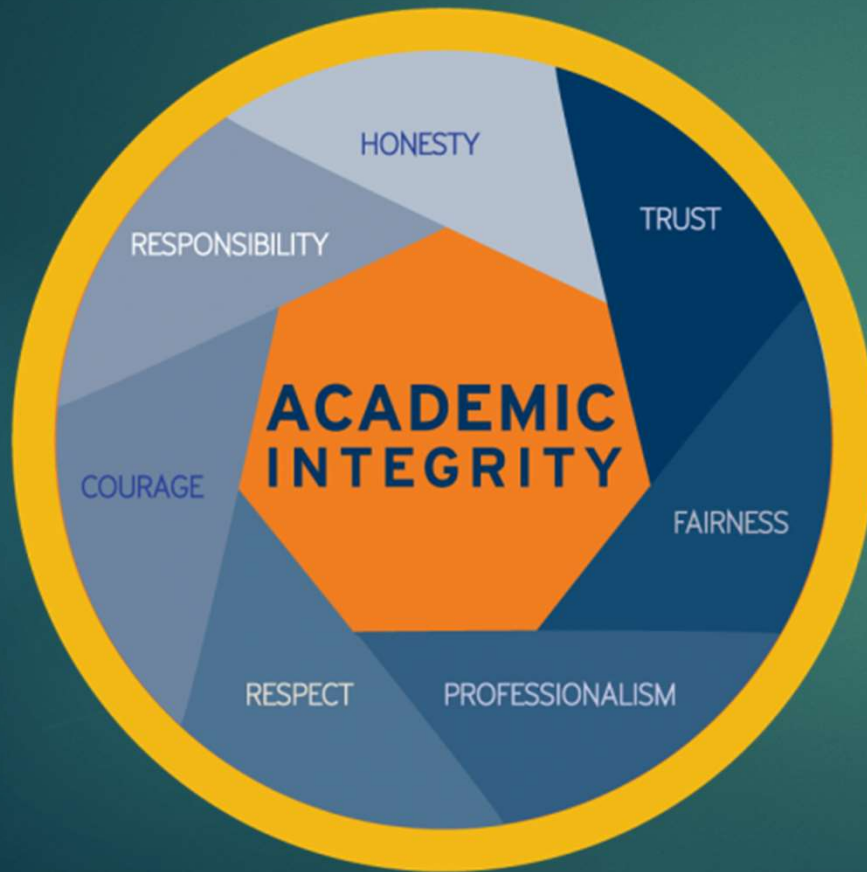(more opportunistic, shorter attention span, immediate feedback)

In the backdrop of:
1. Ever-changing world with more rapid changes
2. A world of more uncertainty
3. An expansion of higher education, i.e., more competition
4. Participants subjected to more social influence/coercion

Getting ahead of others becomes a key objective

Academic integrity in essence is about steering one's moral compass in a community

In practice:
- Do original work
- Credit others' ideas
- Respect knowledge and observation
- Conduct honest work/research
- No falsification of data
- Take full responsibility

How to promote a moral practice - integrity?

Adoption of a policy :   Most institutions have it, the stance
                            When is it disseminated **?**

Prevention :   Educational modules on academic integrity for all
                   It sets the expectation for all
                   Is it a mandated exercise **?**

Change of the instructional and assessment format : the daily practice

Policing :   Plagiarism checking with softwares, e.g., Turnitin, Copyleaks, etc.
                 Check for AI generated material, e.g., Originality, GPTZero, Sapling,
                     etc.

Penalty & support :   Implementation and enforcement
                          The seriousness of handling reflects the priority set at the institution
                          Remedial advising and coaching

Change of instructional and assessment format

Assessments for students:
- Change the assessment tools – not focusing on information alone, but on integration and practical use in novel context
- Assessment by random sampling
- Illustration in action but not via citation
- Elimination of the necessity or possibility of cheating/plagiarism in the assessment
- Promote different objectives of the assessment, not for goals aligned with type 3, 4 institutions, but goals aligned with type 1 and 2 ones.

Demonstration by examples by all parties, and the recognition of it as an honor

What are the hurdles? Where does the burden lie?

- Vision and integrity of institutional leadership
- Senior management taking a moral stance
- Cultural transformation of an institution, a shared value from the top to the ground
- Education on legal and moral framework
- Work load for faculty to uphold the practice of academic integrity
- Devising good assessment can be a creative exercise (which is true for both faculty and for students)
- Resource allocation in each institution counts
- Proper recognition of good practice

Cheating is an adaptive behavior

- Cheating is common in nature, where an individual/group may engage in behaviors that offer an advantage over others in a specific context, compete for limited resources and survival.

- Cheating cannot be eliminated in the living world since it is an adaptive consequence of natural selection.

- It often occurs at a small scale, where it may not have a significant impact on the overall fitness of a population. If it occurs too frequently, the system will collapse.

- Cheating is basically maintained at a low level that balances the net gain of individuals versus the benefit of a big cooperating group.

Our social circles influence our morality.
Over time,
specific acts most people commit or condone become acceptable to us,
while acts they condemn become unacceptable.

Surround yourself with people who will help you be your best.
Populate a campus with those who share this value.
Build an environment that honors integrity.

Integrity is easy to learn, it takes a long time to establish;
it is easy to damage, but takes a long time to repair.
It requires major effort of cultivation!

Thank you